I320.9
ILLI
V. 32
No. 6
C. 3

June 2006 $3.95

Illinois Issues

A publication of the University of Illinois at Springfield



ILLINOIS DOCUMENTS
JUN 0 1 2006
ILLINOIS STATE LIBRARY

Fallout

States face a fraying lifeline

See inside • No pity for the poor
• Alternative medicine
• Dreams deferred

Order now!

Illinois Issues

2006 Roster

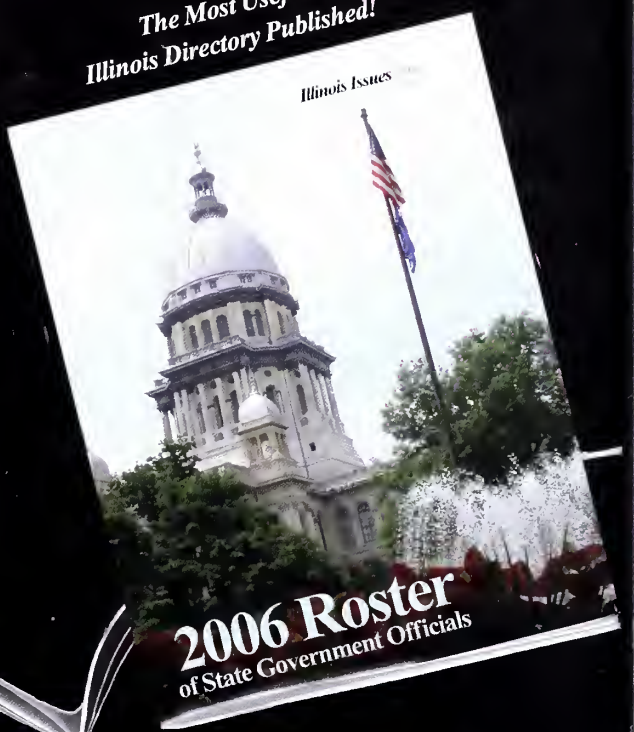
of State Government Officials

ADDRESSES • PHONE NUMBERS • FAX NUMBERS • E-MAIL ADDRESSES • WEB SITE ADDRESSES • LEGISLATIVE MAPS PLUS, PHOTOS OF ALL LEGISLATORS, AND MUCH MORE!

PRICE LIST*:

NUMBER OF COPIES	COST PER COPY	S&H: TOTAL FOR ORDER
1-10	$6.00	$3.00
11-25	$5.00	$5.00
26-50	$4.50	$7.00
100	$4.00	$10.00
250+	$3.00	$20.00

The Most Useful Illinois Directory Published!



This 8-1/2 x 11 slick magazine-style *Roster of State Government Officials* fits neatly into your desk drawer or filing cabinet. Completely updated for 2006, it includes listings for the governor and all other statewide constitutional officers, as well as major executive agencies and their directors. You'll find all Illinois legislators and their district addresses, phone numbers, fax numbers, e-mail addresses, and Web sites. Also includes the Illinois Supreme Court, the Illinois congressional delegation, and media/reporters who cover state government. *Plus*, hundreds of key staff members who work with these officials.

To order call 217/206-6084

**Illinois Issues* subscribers automatically get a FREE copy of the Roster.



State officials realize they'll need to be creative to survive

by Peggy Boyer Long

YES! I want to subscribe to *Illinois Issues*
for one full year. (11 issues in all) at the special introductory rate of just $39.95.

My name _____
Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Daytime Phone: _____

❑ Payment enclosed Account# _____
❑ Bill me later Exp. date _____
❑ MasterCard Signature _____
❑ VISA For faster service, call **1-800-508-0266**.



B606

alternatives to keep those costs down.

But social welfare policy isn't the only arena spurring innovation. States also are rethinking ways to manage — for maintenance; and they're shielded from voter anger over fee hikes.

Bethany Carson, who directs our reporting from the Illinois Statehouse Jasmine Washington reports on the widening gap between the demand and supply of affordable housing. A University of Illinois at Chicago

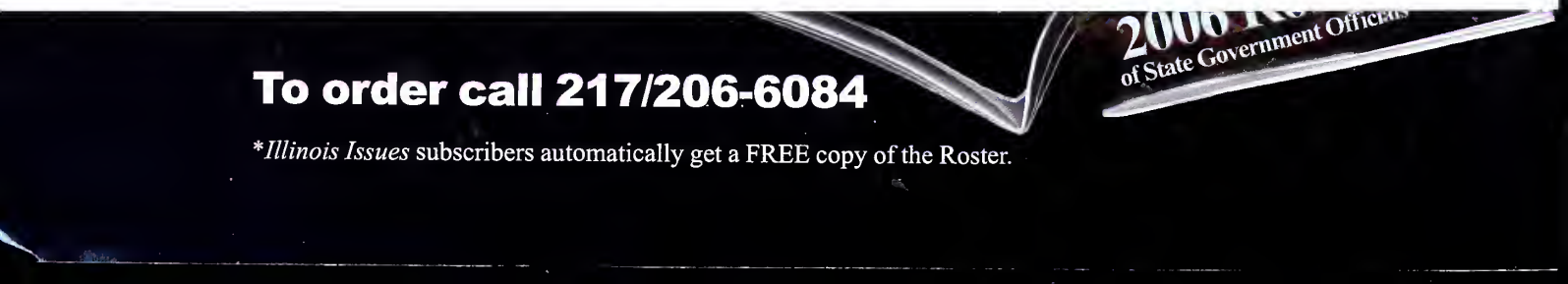


NO POSTAGE
NECESSARY
IF MAILED
IN THE
UNITED STATES

BUSINESS REPLY MAIL
FIRST CLASS MAIL PERMIT NO. 1901 SPRINGFIELD, IL

POSTAGE WILL BE PAID BY ADDRESSEE

Illinois Issues
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT SPRINGFIELD
PO Box 19243
Springfield IL 62794-9980



To order call 217/206-6084

**Illinois Issues* subscribers automatically get a FREE copy of the Roster.



State officials realize they'll need to be creative to survive

by Peggy Boyer Long

As early as 1932, U.S. Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis argued states are potential policy innovators. His evocative phrase, "laboratories of democracy," gained instant and durable fame. But these days, there's a more pertinent maxim for the challenges states face: "Necessity is the mother of invention."

And that's the theme of this edition. If, in his era, Brandeis believed states should be allowed to innovate, in this era of New Federalism, they're forced to do so. The requirement to devise policy, or to cover the costs of policy, has devolved to the states because, increasingly, the federal government can't do it or won't pay for it. State officials realize they'll need to be creative to survive.

This theme was captured on our cover by Kathleen Riley Young, who depicted the fraying connection with the federal government on social welfare policy. Across the country, state and local officials are looking for ways to cover the costs of feeding, housing and caring for the nation's poorest citizens — and weighing alternatives to keep those costs down.

But social welfare policy isn't the only arena spurring innovation. States also are rethinking ways to manage — and pay for — their infrastructure assets, including the airports and roads that constitute much of the nation's transportation network.

We offer examples in this issue. Pat Guinane, reporting from the Indiana Statehouse, assesses the move to lease state and local assets to for-profit companies. "Dubbed public-private partnerships," he writes, "these deals are gaining acceptance from states with major transportation needs but little start-up capital."

Chicago leased the Skyway toll road and is talking about leasing Midway Airport. California has opened the door to private companies running some of that state's roads. And some Illinois officials are talking about leasing this state's tollway system.

Pat, who has covered our legislature as *Illinois Issues*' Statehouse bureau chief, examines the larger trend and outlines the specific economics — and politics — of Indiana's tollway deal.

Privatization of infrastructure can be attractive to state and local officials, he notes. They're promised cash upfront; they can unload responsibility for maintenance; and they're shielded from voter anger over fee hikes.

Bethany Carson, who directs our reporting from the Illinois Statehouse now, examines another kind of public-private partnership: the move to keep health care costs down by increasing the number of citizens who carry medical insurance. The debate among states over health care costs stems from two realities: Federal officials don't appear ready to offer national policy solutions and they're cutting their share of subsidies.

Some states aren't waiting for Uncle Sam. Massachusetts became the first to require all of its citizens to carry medical insurance. A number of other states are weighing their options.

Illinois may not be ready to go as far as Massachusetts, Bethany writes, but a panel representing the health care industry, businesses and consumer advocates is debating a plan designed to increase Illinoisans' access to affordable health care. By December, "the panel will either support an approach that says, 'You're on your own, society,' or a commonwealth approach that champions 'Everybody in and nobody out.'"

Two other writers reflect on the impact of declining federal dollars. Jasmine Washington reports on the widening gap between the demand and supply of affordable housing. A University of Illinois at Chicago

ADVISORY BOARD

CHAIR
***Diana Nelson**, executive director, Cross City Campaign for Urban School Reform, Chicago.*

VICE CHAIR
***Taylor Pensoneau**, author and president of the board of directors, Illinois Center for the Book, Springfield.*

MEMBERS
***MarySue Barrett**, president, Metropolitan Planning Council, Chicago.*
***Margaret Blackshere**, president, Illinois AFL-CIO.*
***Robert J. Christie**, vice president, government relations, Northwestern Memorial Hospital, Chicago.*
***Darcy Davidsmeyer**, director, state government relations, Motorola Inc., Schaumburg.*
***Kathleen Dunn**, vice president, government relations, Illinois Hospital Association.*
***Jim Edgar**, senior fellow, Institute of Government and Public Affairs, University of Illinois.*
***Sharon Gist Gilliam**, chairperson, Chicago Housing Authority.*
***Lawrence N. Hansen**, vice president, Joyce Foundation, Chicago.*
***Doris B. Holleb**, professorial lecturer, University of Chicago.*
***Jetta Norris Jones**, attorney, Chicago.*
***Robert J. Klaus**, president and CEO, Oral Health America, Chicago.*
***Mike Lawrence**, director, Paul Simon Public Policy Institute, Southern Illinois University at Carbondale.*
***Joan W. Levy**, education consultant, Northbrook.*
***William E. Lowry**, vice president for Human Resources and Administration, John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, Chicago.*
***Roberta Lynch**, deputy director, American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, Chicago.*
***Jeff Mays**, president, Illinois Business Roundtable, Chicago.*
***Abner J. Mikva**, visiting professor of law, University of Chicago.*
***Laurence J. Msall**, president, The Civic Federation, Chicago.*
***Dawn Clark Netsch**, professor of law emeritus, Northwestern University School of Law, Chicago.*
***Felicia F. Norwood**, head of Medicaid, Aetna, Inc., Chicago.*
***Aurie Pennick**, executive director, Field Foundation of Illinois, Chicago.*
***Betsy A. Plank**, principal, Betsy Plank Public Relations, Chicago.*
***Sylvia Puente**, director, Metropolitan Chicago Initiative, Institute for Latino Studies, University of Notre Dame.*
***Philip J. Rock**, attorney, Rock, Fusco & Associates, LLC, Chicago.*
***Tom Ryder**, attorney, W. Thomas Ryder, LTD, Springfield.*
***Anna Eleanor Roosevelt**, vice president, community and education relations, Boeing Corp., Chicago.*
***Chuck Scholz**, former mayor of Quincy.*
***Paula Wolff**, senior executive, Chicago Metropolis 2020.*

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS
***Barbara E. Ferrara**, interim executive director, Center for State Policy and Leadership, University of Illinois at Springfield.*
***Robert F. Rich**, director, Institute of Government and Public Affairs, University of Illinois.*

FOUNDING MEMBER
***Samuel K. Gove**, professor emeritus of political science, University of Illinois.*

MEMBERS EMERITUS
(years served on board in parentheses)
Michael J. Bakalis (1983-2001), James M. Banovetz (1986-2005), James L. Fletcher (1983-2000), David Kenney (1978-90), Louis H. Masotti (1978-92), James T. Otis (1975-94), David J. Pandis (1988-94), Carl Shier (1978-87).

report on affordable housing issued in March offered this warning: "While federal resources targeting low-income populations have been steadily declining, the limited resources that are available continue to be diverted to support the development of mixed-income communities on former public housing sites."

Daniel Voek calculates the decline in federal support for community programs. A former Illinois Statehouse reporter, he now works for Stateline.org in Washington, D.C. "The Bush Administration," he writes in this issue, "is trying to tighten domestic spending, and several poverty-related programs are feeling the pinch." In fact, federal support for community programs has declined from $207 million in block grants two years ago to $177 million this year. Someone will have to pick up the difference.

And that appears to be the point of the New Federalism. Political scientist Kent Redfield here at the University of Illinois says some policy wags have a name for federal efforts to devolve unfunded programs to the states. They call it "shift and shaft."

We've come a long way from Justice Brandeis. ❑

Peggy Boyer Long can be reached at peggyboy@aol.com.

A jury of his supporters



There were no controversies among those who deliberated in the corruption trial of Gov. Len Small. According to one account, the jury took 15 minutes to acquit the Kankakee Republican on charges of defrauding the state.

Life was simpler then. Small was known as the "Good Roads Governor," a positive spin on his strategy of rewarding political friends with state-supported hard roads. He was a lawmaker and then a state treasurer before becoming governor in 1921. That same year, he was accused of profiting from a money laundering scheme while state treasurer. Small later settled in a civil case on those charges. Bob Howard, who wrote the first edition of *Mostly Good and Competent Men*, a book about Illinois' governors, allowed that Small "may have tampered with the jury."

In fact, one of our readers tells us that Small took no chances on the jury selection. Charles Chapin, a Springfield attorney, sent us a copy of a letter he says was written in 1940 by his father, Roger E. Chapin. The younger Chapin needed information on an Illinois scandal for a college project. He says his father's career included service as a probate judge and as a member of the Sangamon County Board, and that he testified at Small's trial. His father wrote that Small first evaded the sheriff by heading out on a "hardroad inspection tour" and then claimed immunity "on the basis of the old English rule that the King could do no wrong." After losing that argument, Small did win a change of venue to Waukegan.

Though it's worth noting that the letter is based on memory, it does provide an interesting eyewitness perspective. Here, as written, is the portion of the letter on the jury selection: "Immediately upon the transfer of the case to Waukegan a county wide canvass was arranged to ascertain the attitude of every person in Lake County toward Len Small to aid in eliminating prospective jurors who were unfavorable to him. This canvass was made by baking powder salesmen who came into Lake County in great numbers to sell baking powder from house to house. They offered with each can of baking powder a free portrait of the purchaser's choice of the picture of George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, or Len Small. At that time the feeling for or against Small was pretty strong and the salesmen could tell very clearly whether the household was on Small's side or against him by the reaction to this offer. The baking powder salesmen's tabulations were used in selecting or eliminating jurors."

The letter goes on to say: "Within 30 days after the verdict, 11 of the jurors were on the State pay-roll."

Charles Chapin says his teacher wanted students to see that there is scandal in government. He says he's pretty sure he got an "A" in the course. *Peggy Boyer Long*

ILLINOIS DOCUMENTS
JUN 0 [illegible]
ILLINOIS STATE LIBRARY

Illinois Issues

A publication of the University of Illinois at Springfield

June 2006 *Volume XXXII, No. 6*



Alternative medicine, page 22



Public to private, page 28



Dreams deferred, page 25

FEATURES

18 **No pity for the poor** by Daniel C. Vock
Projected federal budget cuts threaten programs that help Illinois cities care for their neediest citizens.

22 **Alternative medicine** by Bethany Carson
As the nation's health care costs climb, states are looking for relief. One prescription would require everyone to be insured.

25 **Dreams deferred** by Jasmine Washington
Affordable housing is out of reach for a growing number of Illinoisans.

28 **Public to private** by Pat Guinane
Leasing public assets to for-profit companies poses a tantalizing proposition for cash-strapped state and local governments.

32 **Digital divide** by Cedric Herring
Race and ethnicity are factors that determine which Illinoisans are the "haves" in the age of information technology.

DEPARTMENTS

3 EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK
States must be creative to survive.
by Peggy Boyer Long

6 STATE OF THE STATE
States play the domain game.
by Bethany Carson

8 BRIEFLY

34 PEOPLE

36 LETTERS

37 ENDS AND MEANS
Truth depends on who's talking.
by Charles N. Wheeler III

STAFF

Director/Executive Editor, Center Publications
Peggy Boyer Long

MAGAZINE EDITORIAL
Managing Editor: Maureen Foertsch McKinney
Projects Editor: Beverley Scobell
Statehouse Bureau Chief: Bethany Carson
Columnist: Charles N. Wheeler III
Public Affairs Reporting Intern: Jasmine Washington
Graduate Assistant: Vera Leopold
Editorial Assistant: Debi Edmund

BOOKS EDITORIAL
Associate Editor: Amy Karhliker

BUSINESS
Circulation & Marketing Manager: Charlene Lambert
Business Manager: Toni L. Langdon

PRODUCTION
Art Director: Diana L.C. Nelson

Illinois Issues is published by Center Publications
Center for State Policy and Leadership
http://cspl.uis.edu

Credits: *Our cover was illustrated by Kathleen Riley Young.*

Editorial and business office: HRB 10, University of Illinois at Springfield, One University Plaza, Springfield, IL 62703-5407. Telephone: 217-206-6084. Fax: 217-206-7257. E-mail: illinoisissues@uis.edu. E-mail editor: boyer-long.peggy@uis.edu.
Subscription questions: *Illinois Issues*, Subscription Division, P.O. Box 2795, Springfield, IL 62708-2795 or call 1-800-508-0266. Hours are 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Central Time, Monday-Friday (except holidays). ***Subscriptions:*** $39.95 one year/ $72 two years/ $105 three years; student rate is $20 a year. Individual copy is $3.95. Back issue is $5. *Illinois Issues* is indexed in the PAIS Bulletin and is available electronically on our home page: http://illinoisissues.uis.edu. *Illinois Issues* (ISSN 0738-9663) is published monthly, except during the summer when July and August are combined. Periodical postage paid at Springfield, IL, and additional mailing offices.
Postmaster: Send address changes to *Illinois Issues*, Subscription Division, P.O. Box 19243, Springfield, IL 62794-9243.
©2006 by Illinois Issues, *University of Illinois at Springfield, One University Plaza, Springfield, IL 62703-5407. All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or in part without prior written permission is prohibited.* Illinois Issues *is published by the University of Illinois at Springfield. In addition to university support and subscription income, the magazine is supported by grants and donations. The contents of the magazine do not necessarily reflect the views of the university or the donors.*

Bethany Carson



Whose right is it, anyway? States play the domain game with private property

by Bethany Carson

Picture a husband and wife refurbishing their 100-year-old home and opening a bed and breakfast that overlooks a lake in an old resort community. Then imagine a construction crew erecting three-story townhouses right across the street and clearing the way for 39 condominiums in hopes of attracting businesses to a sleepy town.

The plot of land that encompasses the condos and the bed and breakfast is part of a tax increment financing district, an area set aside to boost economic development in Lake Zurich, a northwestern suburb of Chicago and a former resort town. And that has the bed and breakfast owners worried the town could grab their property against their wishes.

Lawmakers found that Illinoisans throughout the state share these worries, so they approved legislation aimed at clarifying the rights of property owners and communities.

Under federal case law, government can take private property and give it to private developers for economic development that would benefit the entire community. But it also allows states to enact limits, which is exactly what the the Illinois General Assembly wanted to do this spring.

Under a measure sent to the governor, future TIF districts would operate under new rules making it more difficult and more expensive for governments to take private property.

Times have changed. We're embedded in sprawling suburbs and surrounded by fewer farms.

This private-public conflict over land use is at the crux of a national debate that has been on the political burner since the U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Kelo v. New London* a year ago this month. The controversial ruling gave a Connecticut town the power to take private land to further economic development.

Landowners balked for the same reason Justice Sandra Day O'Connor dissented. She wrote: "All private property is now vulnerable to being taken and transferred to another private owner, so long as it might be upgraded." In other words, lawmakers decide whose property to take, whom to give it to and what it will be used for. O'Connor said that wipes out the distinction between public and private uses of land that has been protected by the Fifth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution since 1791.

The Illinois Bill of Rights goes one step further, restricting governments' ability to redefine those property rights. Illinois landowners were reassured in 2002 when the state Supreme Court confirmed that governments can't justify taking private land and giving it to a private entity — in this case, a NASCAR racetrack — by claiming it would benefit the general public.

Because the state's courts have repeatedly swung the pendulum in favor of individual landowners, some question whether the state actually needs a new law in response to *Kelo*. But, argues Thomas Geselbracht, a partner at DLA Piper Rudnick Gray Cary and an instructor at Northwestern University School of Law, there's always room for more landowner protections.

Times have changed. We're embedded in sprawling suburbs and surrounded by fewer farms. And local governments are doing everything they can to spur economic development, even if that means uprooting people from their homes.

That doesn't sit well with the American public, Geselbracht says. He adds that the *Kelo* decision was expected, given the Supreme Court's makeup and the support for government in case law. "And yet it generated a firestorm of public opinion that I've never seen before, and I've been doing this for 30 years," he says. "The question is why. I think people are upset that in this country, people that play by the rules can end up losing their land."

Kelo, then, spurred states to take a deeper look at the overall process of land acquisition. Illinois, and nearly every state, has considered ways to strengthen protections of private landowners while encouraging municipalities to revive downtowns.

After many public hearings and multiple drafts, Illinois lawmakers agreed on a measure that further scales back the power granted under *Kelo*. The proposal is sitting on the governor's desk, and his office says it's currently "under review."

If Gov. Rod Blagojevich signs it into law, that would ensure balance in what state Sen. Susan Garrett calls a lopsided process.

"The municipalities had all the authority and the expertise and the resources," she says. "And the property owner, because nothing was written into state law, they had no choice but to relinquish everything or hire an attorney." And property owners, she says, have to pay all court costs, despite having a slim chance of winning.

The Lake Forest Democrat sponsored the measure in her chamber this spring. "We leveled the playing field, and we made the state statutes very clear on what the condemning authority's rights are and what the property rights are for the private owner."

Rep. John Bradley took up the effort in the House. The Marion Democrat and attorney received praise on his chamber's floor last month for including all sides in the discussion and finding a compromise that was approved overwhelmingly in both chambers. The proposal that went to the governor makes it more difficult for municipalities to take land. And, in the limited instances in which they can acquire private property, the measure increases the value for the landowner.

The measure also eases some concerns of municipalities by exempting existing tax increment financing districts and the O'Hare International Airport expansion project so that those efforts can't be halted midstream.

Municipalities still aren't thrilled, but they say the measure is "livable." Roger Huebner, general counsel for the Illinois Municipal League, says members of his group can live with the proposal because it recognizes the ways in which government recruits private developers to revive deteriorating or underused property.

If Gov. Rod Blagojevich signs it into law, that would ensure balance in what state Sen. Susan Garrett calls a lopsided process.

But the measure isn't perfect. Huebner says the substantial change in the law would cost municipalities more money if property owners hold out for bigger settlements. And, he says, interpreting the new language will take time and require court filings at the government's expense.

He agrees the changes did put more balance in the system, but he and many others question why a new law is needed.

A couple who might know is Fred and Suzanne Branding of Lake Zurich. They hope the state does enact a law that will prevent future economic development projects from turning landowners into sitting ducks.

For four years Suzanne Branding has worried about the future of her home-turned-bed-and-breakfast. "We're always at the risk of being condemned for whatever reason," she says. "If they think they can make an extra buck by taking our property away, they'll do it in a minute."

The village intends to build condos to guarantee a consumer base, attracting business, says Craig Taylor, a village trustee on the Planning and Development Committee.

Proponents also hope the extra revenue will relieve the taxpayers' burden of maintaining the aging area.

"The sewer and the water lines and electric, the maintenance of that was a drain on the general fund," Taylor says. "In fairness to the rest of the residents, they were, in essence, subsidizing the improvements. I don't know that was fair. You try to strike a balance."

Public meetings were held, but the Brandings say they never felt part of the process nor as though their concerns were truly heard. Instead, they felt like obstructionists.

Fred Branding, a lawyer, says the proposed condominiums aren't a good fit for the area. "It's too much. It's too dense. It's too high. It's too big," he says. "We don't object to the redevelopment, but we object to the enormity of it."

The village did come under fire from some property owners, but Taylor says all cases were settled out of court.

Suzanne Branding says that doesn't mean everyone's content. "[Homeowners] don't really know and understand what's going on because they're busy putting food on the table, getting kids to school, getting to their jobs," she says.

She was one of them until she felt as though her neighborhood came under siege. "The reason that I'm so passionate about it is, it's just not the right thing to do.

"In TIF districts, for the most part, especially in the suburbs, the reason that your property is being condemned and taken away from you is so a developer can redevelop the property and make money on it. So what's happening is, people are making money on other people's backs. And the government not only is giving them permission to do this, but they're encouraging them to do it."

Taylor says the village's plans are not about power, but about what's best for the community. "As painful as eminent domain is, we certainly tried to minimize the impact on everyone involved and be as fair as possible," he says. "Seriously, none of us on the board took this lightly at all. It's a gut-wrenching experience when you're talking about places where people live."

Cases like Lake Zurich's resonate statewide, but Bradley says he hasn't heard from the governor. "I would hope that he would look at the large number of votes [the measure] received in both chambers and recognize the people of Illinois want this to happen."

In the meantime, Geselbracht says, there's no telling where the momentum will stop. "For many years, the pendulum was swinging in favor of the government. Now I think the pendulum is clearly swinging back in the other direction," he says. "Will it swing too far? Clearly, time will tell." ❑

Bethany Carson can be reached at capitolbureau@aol.com.

BRIEFLY

Illinois State Museum returns stolen artifact to family in Kenya

The Illinois State Museum has agreed to return an African cultural artifact to Kenya after learning that it was stolen from a family in that country more than 20 years ago. The museum is believed to be the first institution in the United States to return one of the wooden memorial posts, known as vigango, though experts have verified that nearly 300 are held by American museums and private collectors.

Vigango are 3- to 9-feet tall and are carved to resemble a human shape. In Kenya, the people known as the Mijikenda erect them to honor deceased members of a secret society and to ensure good luck for the family. Though the Mijikenda believe the vigango should never be moved, many are stolen and sold to art collectors, who may donate them to museums.

"This would be the first case of a museum sending [one] back. There haven't been many African objects that have been repatriated," says Linda Giles, a former professor of anthropology at Illinois State University in Normal. She found the vigango at ISU's museum, where they were stored, and sent them to the state museum in 2001.

The Springfield-based state museum received a letter early this year from a Kenyan museum curator, writing on behalf of the Mwakiru family, asking for the kigango (the singular form of vigango). The staff agreed immediately, says Michael Wiant, who was anthropology curator at the museum when it acquired the kigango as part of a larger collection.

The story of how the kigango arrived at the state museum is a complicated one. After it was taken from the family's land, an art dealer reportedly bought it from a Kenyan souvenir shop. He then sold it to an American actor, who later donated it and other vigango to ISU's museum in 1986.

That's where Giles discovered them six years later. She had done fieldwork with the Mijikenda and recognized the vigango. "I had never seen any in the field, but they had told me that they never move them from where they erect them for their ancestors," she says. "That's why I was so startled to find them there."

Giles requested that the collection of 38 vigango be transferred to the state museum, where the artifacts could be better preserved in humidity- and temperature-controlled rooms.

Then, while giving a presentation, Giles happened to cross paths with Monica Udvardy, an anthropologist from the University of Kentucky who also had worked with the Mijikenda. Udvardy recognized the kigango in a photo Giles showed as one of two that had been stolen from a Kenyan family she worked with years earlier. And Udvardy had a photo of an elder posing with the vigango before they were stolen.

"We compared slides and, sure enough, that was it," says Giles.

In January, the two journeyed back to Kenya and located the Mwakiru family again. The Mwakirus said they had since fallen on bad luck and wanted their vigango back. Curators with the National Museums of Kenya heard about the case and that prompted the letter to the Illinois museum.

Giles and Udvardy have been interviewing other Mijikenda families and getting descriptions and photos of their vigango.

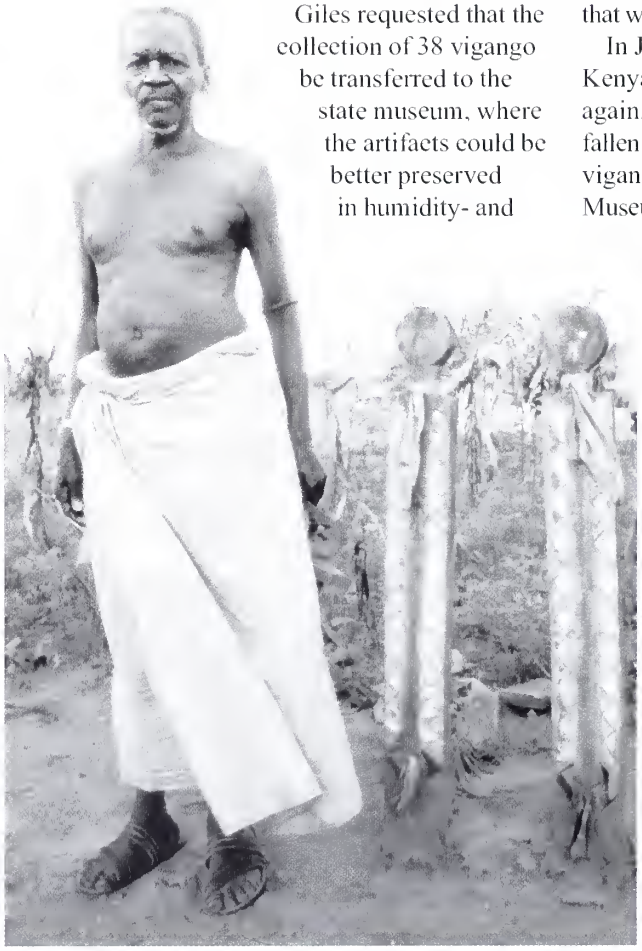
"It's hard to return them unless you know who it was stolen from," says Giles. "We were just lucky that we had a photograph that was taken before they were stolen, and that's very rarely the case."

Now that this kigango is being returned, Wiant thinks the door may open to requests from other families whose vigango were taken.

"My expectation is that there will be a dialogue with our Kenyan curatorial colleagues and the families to talk about the disposition of the remaining vigango," he says. "This recovery may spark other inquiries."

"I think we would be open to that conversation, but it's hard when we're halfway around the world to know how to start that talk."

Vera Leopold



Anthropologist Monica Udvardy's 1985 photograph of Kalume Mwakiru and his vigango, including one that ended up in the Illinois State Museum. The museum has received kudos in the Kenyan press for its decision to send the memorial post back to the Mwakiru family. *Photograph courtesy of Monica Udvardy*

For updated news see the *Illinois Issues* Web site at http://illinoisissues.uis.edu

GOVERNOR'S BUDGET

A so-called compromise

Next year's state budget culminated in tense, last-minute negotiations among Democratic lawmakers the first week in May, but Democratic Gov. Rod Blagojevich got most of what he wanted. Budgeteers called the spending plan a compromise, though no Republicans were involved in the negotiations. Nor did any Republicans vote to approve the budget. Regardless, the governor secured the following list of spending programs for next fiscal year, which begins July 1.

State-funded preschool The $45-million program will subsidize the cost of 3- and 4-year-olds from low- and middle-income families attending preschool. Students who are considered at-risk will get funding first. The program could span two years and help about 10,000 students.

Elementary class size The $10-million pilot project will reduce class sizes in about 20 schools across the state. Schools will receive $50,000 to hire one teacher to instruct students in classes up to third grade.

College grants About $34 million would allow middle-income college students to receive a one-year $500 grant to pay for tuition and fees. Funding for the program has been scaled back from the governor's original proposal and hinges on the sale of student loans currently held by the Illinois Student Assistance Commission.

Other scholarships More than $3 million will pay for nursing scholarships and fellowships, and some nurse educators will get $5,000 to help repay their student loans. A nursing center also would focus on recruitment and collect data about why nurses leave the profession. Another $500,000 will fund scholarships for forensic science graduates who commit to spending four years helping the state test DNA samples.

Veterans' health insurance The $8-million program is expected to help about 7,000 uninsured veterans who are not covered by federal health benefits. The Illinois program will start in September. Lawmakers will have to vote on whether to extend the program beyond one year. About $6 million will come from the state's general revenue fund. The rest will come from an instant ticket lottery game called Veterans Cash.

Medicaid bills The state will pull about $250 million from dedicated funds to make overdue Medicaid payments. With federal matching funds, the state expects to relieve hospitals, pharmacists and long-term care facilities by the end of this month. After that, another $80 million in general revenue funds will reduce the average payment cycle from 86 days to 77.

Public safety About $1.2 million will allow the Department of Corrections to hire 250 more prison guards. Another $1.9 million in state funds, with nearly $5 million in federal funds, will kick off a methamphetamine addiction treatment program at Southwestern Illinois Correctional Center. And more than $8 million will buy about 300 new state police cars.

Riverfront development A pilot program is expected to revive environmentally challenged property in the river towns of Aurora, East St. Louis and Rockford. The governor's budget office says businesses and developers would be eligible for an estimated $6.3 million in tax credits the first year. The program would shell out an additional $20 million in grants, depending on whether the legislature approves a capital budget in the fall.

Revenue sources To pay for the spending, the budget will rely on $580 million in higher-than-expected tax revenues from last year, $200 million in transfers from dedicated funds and $38 million from selling a portion of the state's student loan portfolio. The state also will expect to garner money by phasing out some tax credits, reducing state employee head count and attracting more federal matching dollars.

Construction bonds All efforts to pass a separate budget for school and road projects were doomed this spring. Nothing is expected to happen until fall, when lawmakers could debate whether the state should borrow at least $3 billion to pay for projects that have piled up over the past three years.

Bethany Carson

BY THE NUMBER

Poverty in Illinois

1st in poverty rates among Midwest states

12.5 percent is the poverty rate

1.6 million of 12 million are poor

3.7 million live near poverty

17.7 percent of kids live in poverty

13 percent of women live in poverty

11.5 percent of men live in poverty

30 percent of blacks live in poverty

16 percent of Hispanics live in poverty

8 percent of whites live in poverty

500,000 working families can't meet basic costs

$36,408 equals living expenses for a family of four in rural areas

2.4 jobs are needed to afford a two-bedroom rental on minimum wage

70 percent of former welfare recipients don't have benefits with their jobs

58 percent of households have savings

$387 million in state human service funding was cut from 2001 to 2004

SOURCES: Illinois Poverty Summit, 2006 report. National Low Income Housing Coalition

Representative resigns

Art Tenhouse of Liberty announced his resignation from the legislature after serving 17 years and ranking second in the House GOP. He accepted a position as vice president of government affairs for the Illinois CPA Society, which represents certified public accountants and firms. His resignation takes effect next month.

He was the Republican spokesman on the Environment and Energy Committee and served on the Consumer Protection, Electric Utility Oversight, Labor and Transportation committees.

LEGISLATIVE CHECKLIST

Lawmakers adjourned the first week in May, but not before sending substantive measures to the governor. Some proposals were left hanging.

☑ Veterans

In addition to insuring about 7,000 veterans next year, lawmakers approved a measure to protect veterans' families in times of grief. Protests by hate groups that are within 200 feet of a veteran's funeral would be banned under a proposal supported by Lt. Gov. Pat Quinn. The governor signed the measure in mid-May.

To help pay for services for veterans and their families, the state created the Veterans Cash instant ticket lottery game. The $2 ticket sales garnered $1 million in the first three months. Some of the money will benefit research on post-traumatic stress disorder, homelessness, health insurance and disability benefits for veterans.

Lawmakers also tried to make it easier for veterans to secure jobs. Employers could receive a tax credit for hiring veterans, as well as ex-convicts, under another initiative sent to the governor. The original measure added veterans after critics complained about providing a benefit to ex-offenders.

☑ Train subsidies

Next year's state budget doubled the amount given to Amtrak — from $12 million to $24 million — to run four more round-trips and expand existing services. With additional federal funds, two will be added between Chicago and Springfield, one between Chicago and Quincy and another between Chicago and Carbondale. A state audit said delayed rail services have prevented train travel from being the cheapest route for rank-and-file lawmakers who commute between their home districts and the state Capitol. Supporters say the new round-trips could help ease the problem.

☑ Racing

Horse tracks will receive a subsidy from four of Illinois' nine riverboat casinos in the next two years. The legislature approved a measure that would shave off 3 percent of the profits from four Chicago-area riverboats, all of which gross more than $200 million a year. That money would go toward tracks' facility improvements and marketing of live races. The measure went to the governor.

☑ Smoking

Counties could voluntarily ban smoking, as some cities already have, under legislation that went to the governor. The city of Springfield approved a smoking ban in January that will affect bars, restaurants and bowling alleys within city limits. Businesses just outside the city limits, however, could still allow smoking. Springfield Mayor Tim Davlin sought the measure so bans could be applied evenly to businesses in the same area.

The governor signed a ban on smoking in all of Illinois' private and public colleges.

☑ Drivers' licenses

Teens would have to double their practice time behind the wheel under a measure sent to the governor. The proposal requires that 10 of the 50 practice hours be done at night before students can get their licenses.

Lawmakers also passed a plan that would take licenses away from teenagers who habitually skip school.

☑ Nursing homes

All nursing home residents in Illinois are now subject to criminal background checks under a new law signed by the governor last month. Illinois Attorney General Lisa Madigan proposed the legislation so that nursing homes could know whether any residents were sex offenders or convicted felons. The measure aims to prevent dangerous situations. The Illinois Department of Public Health initially opposed the measure, but it will be responsible for analyzing the criminal histories of identified residents. Staff members already are subject to background checks.

☒ Ethics

Despite former Gov. George Ryan's April conviction for racketeering and mail fraud, ethics reform was the topic of press conferences more often than legislative committee hearings this spring. State Rep. John Fritchey, a Chicago Democrat, revived a measure that was introduced last year on behalf of state Comptroller Daniel Hynes. It would prohibit businesses that hold state contracts worth more than $25,000 from donating to the campaigns of the officeholders who granted the contracts. Companies or individuals that bid more than $10,000 to secure a state contract also would have to disclose all campaign contributions to the office awarding the contract. The measure was never called for debate.

Two other plans for ethics reform, including another push by Hynes to fund state Supreme Court elections through a public tax checkoff and court fees, gained bipartisan support but stalled in the legislative process.

☒ Stem cells

No funding for stem cell research was spelled out in next year's $56 billion budget. However, Gov. Rod Blagojevich has publicly stated he wants to dedicate $15 million next fiscal year for the controversial study. Some lawmakers were concerned because the budget for the current fiscal year did not allocate the $10 million the governor put into the Illinois Regenerative Medicine Institute. Earlier this spring, all Senate Republicans signed a letter pledging to hold up the budget if any money was earmarked for stem cell research using embryos.

☒ Emergency contraception

Proposals that would allow pharmacists the right to refuse to fill a prescription for Plan B, known as the morning-after pill, got stuck in the legislative process. During his State of the State address, Gov. Rod Blagojevich said he wouldn't sign any of the measures if they were approved by lawmakers.

Jasmine Washington

STATUS REPORT

Illinois schools de-desegregated

Chicago Public Schools, the nation's third-largest school district, in May became the latest Illinois system to join a national trend among urban districts: release from federal desegregation orders.

CPS reached an agreement with the U.S. Department of Justice that will release it from its 25-year-old desegregation plan. The federal government and the Chicago Board of Education have until mid-June to respond to objections.

"The goal is to spend dollars where educationally appropriate — for the educators to make those decisions and not the lawyers," says Patrick Rocks, general counsel for the board.

The district spends more than $300 million a year to meet desegregation goals through preschool, after-school, summer school, reading, bilingual and extracurricular programs. Those programs, says Rocks, will continue after court supervision ends in 2007.

In the quarter century since the civil rights suit against Chicago schools sparked the court order, the district has changed. The student population is 90 percent minority. In 1980, 17.2 percent of its students were white, 60.7 percent were African-American and 19.6 percent were Latino.

"The city is much more diverse than those numbers suggest," says Rocks. "The goal of the district is to build good schools. If you build quality education, you will attract a diverse population."

Chicago school officials might look to Rockford Public School District 205, which was released from court monitors in 2002. Students have districtwide school choice and can ride buses anywhere. Yet test scores didn't improve, and the achievement gap widened.

Other communities continue to face strains as they try to search for ways to improve their schools. Champaign is under a voluntary consent decree to provide educational equity for African-American students. Yet voters in March turned down — by nearly a 2-to-1 margin — a $68 million building plan, including two new schools, because the African-American community perceived that it was carrying more of the burden for equal education in the district.

Springfield continues under a consent decree issued in 1976. Busing students to schools outside their neighborhoods to achieve parity began the next year. Yet, in April, three decades later, the newly elected president of the local board of education, Cheryl Wise, was accused of racism for suggesting money used to bus children be spent in neighborhood schools to encourage parent involvement and narrow the achievement gap.

That scenario is playing out in other parts of the country, and in some states the argument for local control is being translated into state statute. Delaware's state legislature approved a law mandating neighborhood schools.

"We are trying to get school boards out from under consent decrees and get back to neighborhood schools," says Joyce Haws, spokeswoman for the National Association for Neighborhood Schools. "True desegregation is when children are free to go to whatever school they choose."

But in Springfield, the African-American community disagrees. "Unfortunately, the neighborhood school would probably put us in the same segregation pattern as before," says Loretta Meeks, a professor of teacher education at the University of Illinois at Springfield. "We found out before that wasn't successful, so why would we return to it."

Meeks is writing a book about the integration of Springfield schools' teaching staff. Some schools were racially mixed, but there were no minority teachers until the mid-1950s.

She points to Georgia Rountree, who was the third of six African-American teachers to join the District 186 staff in the years following *Brown v. the Board of Education*, the U.S. Supreme Court ruling that ordered racial integration of public schools. A graduate of Tennessee State University, Rountree first tried to get a teaching job in 1946 and was hired in 1956.

"When she first interviewed for a job, the principal said, 'This school district has never had a black teacher but will someday, when the time is right,'" says Meeks. "It took 10 years for the time to be right."

Beverley Scobell

TRI STATES
PUBLIC RADIO
WIUM 91.3 & WIUW 89.5

Listen online at *www.tristatesradio.com*

NEWS, INFORMATION, & ENTERTAINMENT FROM

NATIONAL PUBLIC RADIO npr

PUBLIC RADIO INTERNATIONAL PRI

GREAT LAKES RADIO CONSORTIUM

TRI STATES PUBLIC RADIO
WIUM 91.3/WIUW 89.5

News Department
Phone: 309/298-1873 Fax: 309/298-2133 E-mail: rg-egger@wiu.edu

SIMON AWARDS

Reform group gives honors for service

The Illinois Campaign for Political Reform gave its 2006 Paul Simon Public Service Awards to Mike Lawrence, director of Southern Illinois University Carbondale's Paul Simon Public Policy Institute; Newton Minow, former chairman of the Federal Communications Commission; and the *Peoria Journal Star* editorial page.

The group honored Lawrence, a press secretary to former Gov. Jim Edgar and longtime reporter, for contributions to better government.

Lawrence became director of the Paul Simon Public Policy Institute in 2004 following the death of its founder, the former U.S. senator.

Minow, Annenberg Professor of Communications, Law and Policy at Northwestern University and a Chicago lawyer, was honored for "his long commitment to improving the quality of American broadcasting, including his efforts to increase and improve issue-based coverage of election campaigns."

Minow, who co-chaired presidential debates in 1976 and 1980, was chairman of the Carnegie Corporation and the Public Broadcasting Service.

The *Peoria Journal Star* editorial page received kudos from the group because of its "consistent and strong advocacy of good government and campaign finance reform." In a release, the group stated, "For many years, the *Peoria Journal Star* has been a tenacious watchdog of public funds, shining a spotlight on waste and abuse, as well as praising good public servants."

Simon founded the nonprofit, nonpartisan Illinois Campaign for Political Reform in 1999. The group created the award in his honor in 2004 to recognize exemplary contributions to civic life and public participation in Illinois. Previous winners are former Comptroller Dawn Clark Netsch and Judge Abner Mikva, a former U.S. representative.

OPERATION SAFE ROAD

Scandal by the number

79	defendants, including more than 30 current or former secretary of state employees
75	convicted
68	sentenced
2	fugitives
1	case pending
1	dismissed
18	counts on which former Gov. George Ryan was convicted
20	years Ryan could serve for one of the counts, racketeering conspiracy

Operation Safe Road timeline

1991 From the start of then-Secretary of State George Ryan's administration, his friends, including Chicago businessman and lobbyist Lawrence Warner, exercised influence over the office for profit.

November 1994 Six of the Rev. Scott and Janet Willis' children were killed in a fiery car crash when debris from a truck driven by an improperly licensed driver struck the family's van. The driver, who did not speak English, was unable to understand warnings other drivers tried to send him about the material hanging from his semi.

September 1998 Federal prosecutors made the first arrests in the Operation Safe Road investigation into the exchange of licenses for bribes at Illinois secretary of state facilities. The first state employees arrested in the probe were Mary Ann Mastrodomenico, the manager of the Melrose Park licensing facility; Phyllis Volpe, the assistant manager; and retired state employee Carmen Fajdich. Mastrodomenico and the others pleaded guilty to racketeering conspiracy. She admitted to selling more than $50,000 in campaign fundraising tickets through her job.

February 2000 Dean Bauer, Ryan's former secretary of state inspector general, was indicted, and federal prosecutors took a major step toward connecting then-Gov. George Ryan to the scandal. Prosecutors said Bauer, who eventually pleaded guilty to obstruction of justice, ordered an inspector in his office to stop looking into the licensing history of the truck driver involved in the Willis crash.

April 2002 Prosecutors indicted Ryan's campaign chief, Scott Fawell, who also was chief of staff in his secretary of state administration, and accused him of running a scam to divert state money into Ryan's campaign fund.

May 2002 Ryan's friend Donald Udstuen, an Illinois Medical Society executive, was indicted when prosecutors accused him of taking kickbacks from lobbying work awarded through Ryan.

June 2002 Former state Rep. Roger Stanley, another Ryan cohort, was accused of paying bribes to get contracts with the Metra rail system.

March 2003 Fawell and the campaign fund were found guilty. Fawell was imprisoned for his crimes, which included ordering workers to campaign for Ryan on state time.

May 2003 Prosecutors said Fawell's fiancée Andrea Coutretsis destroyed evidence. Later, Fawell agreed to cooperate with prosecutors to get more lenient treatment for Coutretsis.

December 2003 Ryan was indicted on 18 charges by prosecutors who contend he took bribes and steered state contracts. Warner was indicted a second time, that time on charges naming Ryan as the high-ranking government official he worked with to defraud the state.

September 2005 Ryan's trial began. Jurors heard that he repeatedly stayed for free at a contractor's Caribbean resort and kept a Christmas card listing cash gifts from his employees, including custodians and clerical workers.

April 17, 2006 Jurors found Ryan and Warner guilty of 22 charges combined. Ryan vowed to appeal.

COURTS

Scholar says computer animation may bias jurors

In the recent high-profile sentencing trial of Zacarias Moussaoui, the so-called 20th 9/11 hijacker, prosecutors showed the jury a computer animation of the final minutes of United Airlines Flight 93.

Whether the short film played a role in the jury's deliberations is unclear, but the use of such visual aids in courtrooms is growing. It's a forensic tool with few guidelines that raises many questions about whether it helps or harms justice.

Researchers at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign have some answers. Psychology professor Neal Roese and several colleagues showed 117 undergraduate students short animations of vehicles heading toward an accident. One group saw a resulting accident; another saw events leading up to, but not including, an accident. Those seeing the accident were asked to disregard that knowledge and imagine themselves in the same mind-set as the other group that had not seen the end result.

"Participants who see how an accident happens have a very difficult time disregarding this knowledge and cannot place themselves in the shoes of naive observers who did not see the accident," says Roese.

The study found that hindsight bias, which is known to interfere with a juror's ability to make fair decisions, is doubled when movements in a sequence of events are shown in a video format rather than in the usual text-plus-diagram descriptions.

"Many lawyers assume that computer video animations help clarify the evidence, and, therefore, help jury decisions to be fairer and more closely grounded in the facts," says Roese. "Our findings indicate instead that a computer animation introduces its own additional bias, making people more punitive and more likely to hand out harsh penalties."

Photograph courtesy of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign



Neal Roese, a psychology professor at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, is researching whether the use of computer simulations biases juries.

The study, published in the April issue of *Psychological Science*, was co-authored by Florian Fessel and Amy Summerville, U of I psychology doctoral students; Justin Kruger, a former U of I professor now at New York University; and Michael Dilich of FORESIGHT Reconstruction, a Northbrook consulting firm. *Beverley Scobell*

State high court considers freedom of press cases

Two cases before the Illinois Supreme Court have called into question legal doctrines that have protected the state's journalists for decades: the innocent construction rule and the fair report privilege.

In one case, Chicago attorney Patrick Tuite claims the authors of a true-crime book imply he was paid a million dollars in cash to fix a trial for a mobster facing certain conviction. Even though the mobster was convicted, Tuite contends the book's statements that he "had it all handled" and that acquittal "was a done deal" were defamatory. He also says he never represented the mobster, serving only as a consultant, and did not accept any illicit cash.

The case was dismissed after the trial judge decided the passage was capable of "innocent construction." That is, the book does not exclusively imply that Tuite would bribe judges — it could be read as a "compliment to [Tuite's] well-acknowledged trial skills," an appellate court judge wrote.

Illinois is one of only five states that recognize the innocent construction rule. The doctrine has roots in 16th-century England, when judges began considering allegedly defamatory statements *in mitiori sensu* — in the milder sense — to reduce an onslaught of defamation cases. The concept had largely been abandoned by the late 18th century, but the Illinois Supreme Court resurrected the rule in a 1962 libel suit involving the *Chicago Tribune*.

Tuite is urging the court to join the more than 40 states that employ "reasonable construction," which allows statements that could reasonably be construed as defamatory to get a hearing before a jury.

The other case involves the "fair report privilege," which immunizes members of the media from libel suits when they fairly and accurately repeat allegations made in public documents or proceedings — court papers or town meetings, for example.

Start magazine and Specialty Publishing Co. thought they were on safe ground in 2003 with "Conspiracy of a Shakedown," an article about an antitrust lawsuit brought by Rockwell Automation against Solaia Technology. Solaia sued Specialty, alleging defamation and charging that the magazine was "secretly working" with Rockwell.

The case was dismissed under the fair report privilege, but an appellate court later reinstated it. Despite acknowledging the headline was a "fair abridgement" of the case, the appellate justices ruled the fair report privilege was trumped by Solaia's allegation the magazine acted with malice while in cahoots with Rockwell.

Decisions in *Solaia v. Specialty Publishing* and *Tuite v. Corbitt* are expected later this year.

Brian Mackey
Statehouse bureau
Chicago Daily Law Bulletin

Rethinking police lineups

Second only to a confession, eyewitness identification serves as one of the most influential pieces of evidence in a criminal trial, says Jerry Norton, professor at Loyola University Chicago School of Law. But there's a growing concern that traditional police lineups taint witnesses' ability to pick the right suspects, leading to wrongful convictions.

The ultimate goal is to minimize the chance of planting a seed of error, and some researchers have advocated for a newer process for police lineups altogether. That new method was compared to the more traditional method by three Illinois police departments in 2004, making them the first in the nation to compare the methods in the field rather than in a lab. Results, however, are mixed, and researchers cast doubt on whether the study can conclude that one method is more effective than the other.

The traditional method, standing suspects shoulder to shoulder in a line, started to raise red flags in the 1990s when multiple studies suggested some wrongful convictions were based on misidentified suspects. For instance, a 1998 study looked at the use of DNA tests to reverse convictions. Results showed that 90 percent of 40 cases analyzed involved witnesses who incorrectly picked suspects.

"It's really been the DNA that's told us that we're really not doing as good a job as we thought we were doing," Norton says. However, because DNA samples are not available in the lion's share of cases, researchers are looking for ways to improve the accuracy of eyewitness identifications.

Illinois took one step in 2002 when then-Gov. George Ryan's Commission on Capital Punishment recommended changes to the entire system, six of which addressed police lineups. Some of the recommendations were adopted in a 2003 law, which also called for the Illinois State Police to administer a one-year pilot program comparing the old and the new lineup methods.

The police departments of Chicago, Joliet and Evanston were chosen based on population size. More than 450 police officers were trained, and about 700 lineups were studied. First, the new method required someone who was unaware of the suspect's identity to conduct the lineup. That was supposed to lower the risk of influencing the witness's decision. Second, witnesses viewed the lineup one by one, saying yes or no before seeing the next person. That process was supposed to reinforce witnesses' selections because they compared the lineup to the image in their memory, rather than comparing the suspects to each other.

The results did not support the conclusions of previous studies that advocated for the one-by-one method with an independent administrator. In fact, witnesses who viewed the potential suspects one by one were less likely to identify anyone and were more likely to select someone who was there just to fill space.

The director of the pilot program, Sheri Mecklenburg, said in a March report to the General Assembly that finding independent people to conduct the lineup was difficult and sometimes delayed investigations, adversely affecting the witness's relationship with officials. Mecklenburg now serves as the general counsel to the superintendent of the Chicago Police Department.

Capt. Dan Roach, investigations commander for that department, says testing in the field involves more complications. "You can control all kinds of factors and variables in a lab, but when you are out in the real world, and real victims and real suspects, there are some factors that you cannot control."

Researchers pointed to possible flaws in the procedure that could have prevented anyone from knowing whether the independent lineup administrator works better than the traditional lineup.

Sacha Coupet, research director for the Civitas ChildLaw Center at Loyola Law School, says the study had limitations. There were far too many variables tested at once, she says. "It allows for too many unknowns to creep into the experiment."

She adds a better experiment might have separated the study into more control groups to test each individual factor. For instance, the study could have looked at whether the independent administrator affected the witness's choice, while another part of the study could have looked at whether the process of reviewing suspects one by one or all at once enabled witnesses to make an accurate selection.

Mecklenburg says the pilot program did exactly what the Illinois State Police department was told to do. The General Assembly requested that the pilot program compare the two methods in a real-world setting, not segregate the individual factors as a way to tell which had the most impact on the witness's accuracy.

Coupet says the pilot program, while limited, still serves as a good starting point for policymakers. "There's an opportunity to still be a pioneer," she says. "There aren't too many states that are so willingly devoted to the time and energy to make this happen."

Police lineup studies have been done in California, Minnesota, New Jersey, New York and Texas, but Illinois conducted the first field study comparing the one-by-one method to the traditional side-by-side method. It was also the first field study to test photo arrays and live lineups, according to Mecklenburg's March report.

The next step, says state Sen. John Cullerton, a Chicago Democrat who sponsored the 2003 legislative response to the Commission on Capital Punishment's recommendations, is for lawmakers to consider the study and its limitations and determine whether another study should be done next year. *Bethany Carson*

Quotable

"Illinois is apparently a petri dish for corruption. It is a real breeding ground."

Cynthia Canary, director of the Illinois Campaign for Political Reform, as quoted by The Associated Press in a report about a speech she gave following former Gov. George Ryan's conviction on 18 corruption-related charges.

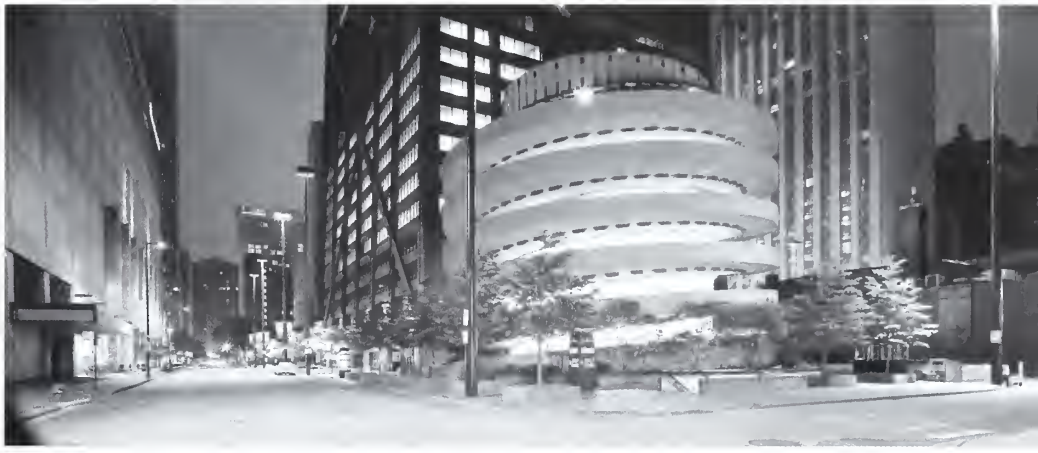
Artist's focus comes to Chicago

Photographer Catherine Opie has spent the past seven years documenting major American cities. Two years ago, she brought her camera to Chicago, and the results of her efforts are on display at the Museum of Contemporary Art until October 15.

The Los Angeles-based artist's photographs of Chicago are part of her *American Cities* series, which has honed in on key aspects of such locales as Los Angeles, Minneapolis, New York and St. Louis. The exhibit includes 14 black-and-white photographs of Chicago that show the city's architecture at night and a group of color large-format views of Lake Michigan that were shot during different seasons.

The Museum of Contemporary Art is located at 220 E. Chicago Ave., a block east of Michigan Avenue in Chicago. The museum is open Tuesday through Sunday.





Top photo: Untitled #4 (Chicago) 2004

Second photo:Untitled #3 (Chicago) 2004

Third photo: Untitled #1 (Chicago) 2004

Bottom photo: Untitled #2 (Chicago) 2004



Photographs courtesy of Regen Projects, Los Angeles, and the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago



Party on



Guests attending private events at state historic sites might want to raise a toast to state lawmakers. The legislature sent a measure to the governor that would allow liquor to be served at wedding receptions and business parties.

Despite easing through the Senate with little opposition, the proposal got caught in the House when lawmakers opposed the idea of selling alcohol at family-friendly museums.

Though House sponsor Rep. Dan Reitz, a Steeleville Demoerat, said liquor would not be sold during business hours, only 10 House members voted to approve the mcasure on the first vote. When the proposal was considered later, it passed 71-43.

Private rentals at the Abraham Lineoln Presidential Library and Museum brought in more than $200,000, according to the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency. At the beginning of the year, the agency says, it lost potential revenue by turning away more than 60 groups that wanted to serve liquor at events. Agency spokesman David Blanchette says the measure, once signed, could generate between $400 and $5,000 per rental for the state.

The current law allows only not-for-profit organizations to serve alcohol at functions on state property. The Vaehel Lindsay House, the Old State Capitol and the Dana-Thomas House are some of the historic sites where people ean hold private gatherings.

Meanwhile, some of the state's historie sites will be open seven days a week. The new extended sehedule is linked to the tourist season, with some sites starting seven-day openings in April and others in May. The new schedule will continue until Labor Day. *Jasmine Washington*

HISTORY

Illinois vies for two new heritage areas

Should Congress agree, Illinois could have two more national heritage areas that together would cover 59 counties, generate $20 million in federal grants and millions more in cultural tourism dollars.

A Lincoln-focused central Illinois swath of 42 counties and the southernmost 17 counties would join 27 other federally designated areas. Those include the Illinois and Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor, which runs 61 miles from Chicago to Peru. It was established in 1984 as the first heritage area in the nation.

A heritage area receives $10 million from the federal government that has to be matched by local funds. Areas are promoted by the National Park Service.

Last year, U.S. Sens. Richard Durbin and Barack Obama introduced legislation to establish the Abraham Lincoln National Heritage Area, which includes sites that have cultural or historic connections to the 16th president. An identical bill was introduced in the House by U.S. Rep. Ray LaHood, a Peoria Republican, and is cosponsored by the entire Illinois delegation.

Now southern Illinoisans are hoping they will be added to the list.

"Sen. Durbin says he is not averse to pushing for both areas," says Jim Hanson, a project coordinator who works in the Office of Economic and Regional Development at Southern Illinois University Carbondale.

Visitors spent $404 million in southern Illinois in 2004, whieh was a 20 percent inerease since 1999. And cultural tourism is a fast-growing sector of the tourism industry.

The working theme for the proposed southern Illinois heritage area is "Land Between the Rivers: Confluence of Freedom in Southern Illinois."

The area between the Wabash, the Ohio and the Mississippi rivers witnessed some of the earliest exploration and settlement by Europeans — some heroes and some villains.

George Rogers Clark led a group that defeated the British in the Illinois territory and helped secure America's independence. Eight decades later, Gen. Ulysses S. Grant secured the confluence of the Ohio and the Mississippi for the Union and built Fort Defiance as a staging area, a tactic that helped the North win the Civil War.

The story includes villains sueh as Samuel Mason, a Cave-in-Rock pirate who preyed on early settlers traveling by flatboat on the Ohio River. And just north, near Equality, John Hart Crenshaw held slaves and used his mansion as a base for a "reverse Underground Railroad," selling runaways and free blacks into slavery.

The state's first state capital at Kaskaskia and the earliest symbol of the state's riches, the Shawneetown Bank, also are sites within the proposed southern Illinois heritage area.

Beverley Scobell

UPDATES

- President George W. Bush called for Clean Air standards to be eased as a way to bring gas priees down. (See *Illinois Issues*, May, page 18, and July/August 2003, page 24.)
- A National Collegiate Athletic Association eommittee denied the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign's appeal of the NCAA's opposition to the Chief Illiniwek mascot, which means the university is barred from hosting postseason tournaments. (See *Illinois Issues*, October 2005, page 11.)
- Auditor Gencral William Holland issued a second critical audit of the Illinois Department of Central Management Services' spending on leased spaee. (See *Illinois Issues*, February 2005, page 14.)
- A Cook County judge declined to block Gov. Rod Blagojevich's 2005 executive order that dedicated $10 million in state funds to stem eell research. (See *Illinois Issues*, September 2005, page 8.)
- South Dakota residents are collecting signatures to foree a referendum on a law passed this spring that would ban abortion in that state. (See *Illinois Issues*, April, page 17.)

New Illinois sites added to national list of historic places

Several Illinois sites were added this year to the National Register of Historic Places. They include Chicago's Pilsen Historic District, the Garrison School in Rockford, the Joliet YMCA, the Kewanee Hotel, the Marywood Academy in Evanston, the McJunkin House in Winnetka, the Monmouth Courthouse Commercial Historic District, the Ross House in Rochester, the Westervelt Christian Church and the following:

North Mayfair

The Chicago Bungalow is a distinct architectural style, and the nearly 700 documented in North Mayfair enabled the Northwest Side community to receive National Register of Historic Places status. Bounded by West Foster Avenue, North Pulaski Road and North Kilbourn to West Lawrence avenues, the neighborhood lies within Albany Park. It's the fifth bungalow neighborhood to achieve the designation.

From 1913 to 1930, the brick bungalow provided a well-designed, solidly built modern house for a growing middle class of blue- and white-collar workers buying their first homes. More than a third were owned by immigrant families moving out of city tenements.

As an incentive to restore and preserve historic homes, the state offers homeowners in a historic district a property tax freeze for eight years, with another four years of gradual increases to current levels.

Photographs courtesy of Historic Chicago Bungalow Association



4324 W. Argyle St.



This photograph was taken at 4054 W. Argyle St. in Chicago in 1922, the heart of an era when blocks of brick bungalows were built in North Mayfair, which recently got National Register of Historic Places status.

Morris

The story of small-town Illinois is captured by Morris. The Grundy County seat, home to about 12,000 residents, is located on the Illinois and Michigan Canal, a National Historic Landmark. The canal opened in 1848.

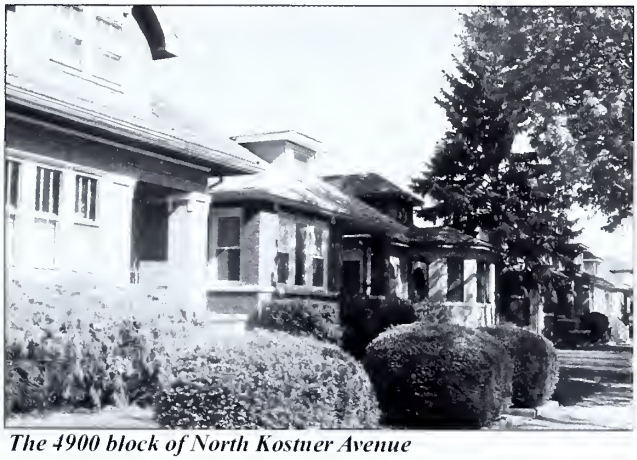
The rural town's businesses are reflected in the 19th- and 20th-century architectural styles of its shopping district. The earliest buildings date from around 1850 to 1956, the cutoff for Register significance. The uniformity of the streetwall's heights and materials, along with the diversity of architectural treatments, ties the modern downtown to its heritage.

Bucky dome home

The R. Buckminster Fuller and Anne Hewlett Fuller Dome Home in Carbondale was built in 1960 and served as home to the architect, designer and inventor who patented the design for geodesic domes. The home, which made the Landmarks Preservation Council of Illinois' list of 10 most endangered historic places in 2004, was the only geodesic dome that Buckminster Fuller lived in.

The structure's new listing will open more grant possibilities to the RBF Dome Not-for-Profit, the organization in charge of its maintenance. The RBF Dome board hopes to turn it into a museum dedicated to Fuller and his ideas and principles.

Vera Leopold and Beverley Scobell



The 4900 block of North Kostner Avenue



The 5000 block of North Lowell Avenue



No pity for the poor

Projected federal budget cuts threaten programs that help Illinois cities care for their neediest citizens

by Daniel C. Vock

To the head of Aurora city government's neighborhood redevelopment office, a long-running federal effort to make life better for people in lower-income neighborhoods is worth more than the money it brings to the state's second-largest city.

Michael Kamon, Aurora's redevelopment chief, credits the Community Development Block Grant program with helping the city build connections. It helps Aurora officials work with a vast network of support agencies and with residents. "With that money reduced or eliminated," Kamon says, "all of these relationships, all of this knowledge would be wiped away" as those support agencies court other funding sources.

This year, Aurora received $1.26 million through the federal grant program. That's down from $1.47 million two years ago. Under the budget President George W. Bush submitted to Congress in February, that number could dwindle even further next year — down to $947,000 by one estimate.

The Bush Administration is trying to tighten domestic spending, and several poverty-related programs are feeling the pinch.

Entitlement programs such as Medicaid and Medicare consume a greater portion of the nation's budget every year, but administration attempts to curb those costs have met stiff resistance. Meanwhile, the expense of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, plus the lost revenues from Bush's signature tax cuts, is making federal dollars for social programs scarce. And the effect is being felt in Aurora's neighborhoods, in Chicago's food pantries and in downstate's housing projects.

The decline in spending on Community Development Block Grants offers a good example. Administration officials regularly tout the importance of the program, which, in more than 30 years, has distributed more than $113 billion to local governments.

In Illinois, 41 cities received money directly from the feds through the community development grants. So did Cook and each of the collar counties, plus Madison and St. Clair counties in the Metro East region. Smaller cities and towns get a piece of the action, too, by applying through the state.

Two years ago, Illinois communities collected $207 million through the block grants. This year, they took in $177 million. According to projections by the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials, they would receive only $132 million for the year that starts October 1. That's a 36 percent drop in three years.

Nationally, the block grants cost $3.7 billion this year; in the president's budget for next year, they would cost $3 billion. That includes the $300 million pool to reward high-performing government recipients. But, all told, Bush's plan would cut $1 billion in a single year — or more than a quarter of the money devoted to the traditional grants.

A top official of the Department of Housing and Urban Development told members of the U.S. House in April that the program is "the federal government's primary vehicle for assisting state and local governments in undertaking a wide range of community development activities aimed at improving the lives of low- and moderate-income families."

But at the same time, Assistant Secretary Pamela Patenaude called for an overhaul of the program because, she said, "the program's impact has become diffused over time."

Patenaude said the formulas for deciding how much towns, cities and counties receive from the grants are outdated and need to be overhauled. And she promoted an administration initiative to take some of the program's money and direct it to the best-performing local governments.

In all sorts of domestic programs, the Bush Administration has called for better targeting of resources, even as it has scaled back many popular programs. It's an approach that calls on federal agencies to measure the success of their programs. For initiatives that don't perform well — or haven't shown that they do — the administration has regularly recommended reduction, consolidation or even elimination.

While cuts in community block grants may hurt such programs as PADS that provide temporary shelter, another Bush Administration proposal would eliminate funding for a major initiative designed to help those who need housing permanently.

Though the process can be painful, there are few alternatives that are politically palatable.Cities such as Aurora, which have already scaled back their support for redevelopment projects, will have to cut even more. That's bad news in many corners of Aurora because the block grants sustain so many efforts.

The program helps support two local homeless shelters, a domestic violence program, mental health services and a health care clinic for the poor.

The city uses it to remove lead paint from older houses. It spends money to help poorer property owners insulate their homes and make them more energy-efficient. The funds enable the city to spruce up parks and to fight crime by installing better lighting in some of its older neighborhoods.

And Aurora has used the grant program to help nonprofit organizations build additions to their buildings or make their facilities accessible to the disabled.

In one instanee, the money is paying to air eondition a 45,000-square-foot building that houses the state's largest homeless shelter outsidc Chicago. The project requires replacing five heating and air-conditioning units, eaeh weighing at least 3 tons. The project will allow the building that houses Public Action to Deliver Shelter (or PADS, as it's usually called) to go at least a deeade without having to upgrade its ventilation units. More important, it will prevent situations like one last year when carbon monoxide leaked into the men's sleeping area, says Ryan Dowd, PADS' executive direetor.

The grant program provides "funds for things that are not as politically popular to fund but are incredibly necessary," he says. In the case of PADS, the federal money makes it easier to house an average of 200 homeless people a night and provide them with food, job training, legal services and health care as they make the transition out of the shelter.

While cuts in eommunity block grants may hurt such programs as PADS that provide temporary shelter, another Bush Administration proposal would eliminate funding for a major initiative designed to help thosc who need housing permanently.

This year, as he has done four years in a row now, Bush is trying to eliminate the HOPE VI initiative, which led to one of the biggest transformations in the urban landscape over the past dccade. Approved by Congress in 1992, HOPE VI led to the destruction and renovation of such dangerous public housing units across the country as the Robert Taylor Homes on Chicago's South Side.

In its first 12 ycars, the program used $6.1 billion to move people from "severely distressed" public housing units into better quarters, often in mixed-income neighborhoods. The federal funding played a role, for example, in the transformation of Cabrini-Green, Henry Horner Homes and Rockwell Gardens in Chicago.

But the program's effects have been felt in smaller communities, too. It provided for new houses at Champion Park Apartments in Rockford and River-West in Peoria, plus the replacement of the John Hay Homes in Springfield with Madison Park Place. It even paid for the destruetion of 20 public housing units in Greenview, a Menard County village of some 840 people 12 miles northeast of Petersburg.

The Springfield Housing Authority's transformation of Madison Park Plaee was completed six years ago. It now offers 194 units of low-income housing — including 44 units sold to private owners — on the city's northeast side. Normally, public housing is geared toward people making less than 30 percent of an area's median income, but Madison Park Place is open to people making up to 80 percent of the region's average income. That means the new projeet creates a more diverse neighborhood that also caters to the working class, says Jackie Newman, the housing authority's exccutive director.

Newman says the agency won't necessarily suffer if HOPE VI is eliminated because it has no such projeets under way. But she says there's no denying how much it helped replace the John Hay Homes. "We would have to have been extremely creative to raise that sort of capital, espeeially as a public housing authority."

Still, the program has earned mixed reviews. A 2003 federal Government Accountability Office report found that,

in the program's first decade, only 15 of the 165 HOPE VI projects that were started had been completed.

The Bush Administration has decided it's time to pull the plug on the program. In its budget, the administration noted that HOPE VI "has surpassed its goal of funding the demolition of 100,000 nonviable public housing units and replacing them with new, less dense public and privately owned mixed-income housing. However, the program has been excessively costly when compared to other programs proposed for funding that produce new affordable housing."

Public housing advocates successfully defended the program from previous administration assaults, though its funding has dropped off. They say there's still plenty of work to be done in upgrading dilapidated public housing projects. The Council of Large Public Housing Authorities estimates that another 46,000 to 82,000 units would qualify for rehabilitation.

Another effort targeted for elimination is the Commodity Supplemental Food Program, which distributes excess food bought by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, primarily to needy seniors.

The Bush Administration says the program overlaps with other government outreach efforts, specifically the Food Stamp Program and the Women, Infants and Children [WIC] program.

In fact, supplemental commodities is more limited in scope than the other two programs. But it still gives out food to 420,000 people in 32 states every month. About 88 percent of those recipients are seniors. The packages are designed to offer a healthy supplement to their diets; they include canned fruits and vegetables, juices, tuna, cereal, pasta, cheese and peanut butter.

In Illinois, the operation serves more than 15,000 individuals, all in Chicago and Cook County. The program depends on food — not money — delivered by the federal government, so it's difficult to expand.

Dennis McSwain oversees distribution of the federal foodstuffs to charities in Illinois as the director of Catholic Charities of Chicago's community development and outreach services. He says while the food isn't enough to get someone through the whole month, it's a valuable resource for seniors, especially those who have the packages delivered to their homes. Eliminating the program "would be devastating for low-income seniors," he says, "who have to make difficult choices on a daily basis as far as buying medicine, paying rent and buying food."

The fallout could be even larger, warns Maura Daly, a spokeswoman for America's Second Harvest, a Chicago-based organization that collects and distributes 2 billion pounds of food every year to 50,000 local charities across the country. Without the program, about 420,000 seniors nationwide would have to find another way to get food, and they would inevitably turn to the charities in Second Harvest's network, Daly says. "Our food banks are always the ones picking up demand."

And Daly says the other two federal programs won't be as good a fit for the people now receiving the supplemental commodity packages. Only 12 percent would receive WIC benefits, she says, and food stamps don't offer the variety of foods that the supplemental program does.

The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, a Washington, D.C.-based organization that advocates on behalf of the poor, noted in a February report that food stamp qualifications are more restrictive than those for supplemental commodities. And the group points out that people who get the supplemental packages already receive information on how to sign up for food stamps.

"Seniors can find the food stamp application process long, intrusive and time-consuming. The program remains stigmatized for low-income seniors, who fear uncomfortable experiences at the food stamp office and believe that the forms and notices are written in a way that makes them feel guilty or ashamed to apply for food stamps," the center's analysts wrote.

Congress will have the last word on whether to enact Bush's proposals. So far, it has put the brakes on some of the administration's more drastic ideas. But years of budget cuts are taking their toll.

Three years ago, Mutual Ground Inc., a domestic violence shelter in Aurora, lost $223,000 in government support, primarily because of federal cuts. While that left $1.7 million for the year, the group had to lay off 13 of its 62 staff members, says executive director Linda Healy. Funding remains flat, but Mutual Ground's caseload has been growing steadily. Last year, it provided shelter and assistance to 1,800 women and children who were victims of domestic violence. It took care of another 400 victims of sexual assault — more than half of them children.

Budgets are so uncertain there that Healy says she can't offer her staff regular raises. Instead, she keeps salaries flat and splits up whatever remains of the agency's budget in end-of-year bonuses. But there's no guarantee there will be money left over for those bonuses.

Healy says the Community Development Block Grants help Mutual Ground keep going, but it's still not enough. "They're still not paying for every Aurora woman that needs shelter."

And there are some grounds for Kamon's worries that reduced funds could mean fewer ties between the city of Aurora and community organizations as those groups seek other sources of funding.

Theodia Gillespie, president of the Quad County Urban League, an organization that promotes education and jobs in the black community, says the league has already felt the squeeze from federal budget cuts and is looking for ways to support its mission that don't depend on the government. For example, it's considering charging for the referral when companies use its work trainees, Gillespie says.

Now the group receives block grant money for building renovation and operation of employment programs. But this year, support for the work-training project dropped from $18,000 to $5,000.

And the Urban League isn't alone, she adds. "Nonprofits are not focusing on government funding so much now because it varies year after year." ❑

Daniel C. Vock, a frequent contributor to Illinois Issues, *is a reporter for Washington, D.C.-based Stateline.org and a former Statehouse bureau chief for the* Chicago Daily Law Bulletin.

Alternative medicine

As the nation's health care costs climb, states are looking for relief. One prescription would require everyone to be insured

by Bethany Carson

When fewer people have health insurance, everyone pays more. Nationwide, the added expense of treating everything from sore throats to heart disease in the emergency room is significant — about $41 billion in 2004 — according to a January report by the Kaiser Commission on Medicaid and the Uninsured.

Because an uninsured person only pays about a third of his or her hospital bill, the hospital and its patients who are insured pay the difference, says Jim Duffett, executive director of the Illinois Campaign for Better Health Care. "The average family of four last year paid more than $1,000 above their premium costs to treat the uninsured," he says.

Illinoisans who didn't have medical insurance constituted 14 percent of the state's total population, or about 1.8 million people, in 2004, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. That's slightly less than the nationwide average of about 15 percent.

There are two main reasons people don't have insurance. Fewer businesses offer private medical coverage for employees and retirees than they did in 2000, according to the Kaiser report. And public insurance programs offered by state and federal governments don't cover most people until they turn 65. That means middle-aged adults are at risk of falling through the cracks, leaving some without insurance just as they acquire chronic conditions that are expensive to treat. As a result, hospitals and community clinics that care for the uninsured get squeezed to cover those costs.

Furthermore, the federal government's spending on health care subsidies has declined in recent years, according to the Kaiser report, down from an average of $546 per uninsured person in 2001 to just below $500 per person in 2004.

Federal officials don't appear ready to offer solutions to rising costs, either. For years, Congress has avoided discussing "universal health care," a term that has many connotations.

As a result, some states have decided to take the lead in exploring new ways to relieve the fiscal pain. At least one has gone so far as to require all of its citizens to carry health insurance. A handful of others, including Illinois, are inching toward a variety of health care systems that would include everyone. The approaches range from offering a single plan for everyone in the state to expanding employer-based benefits through tax credits, as well as subsidizing plans for the poorest citizens, according to the Kaiser report. While Illinois may not be ready to require health insurance, it has set a deadline for finding more ways to improve access to health care.

Duffett says a new state task force that has been studying the issue may be nearing a compromise, but conflicting ideas about whether government should have a heavy hand in the business sector and in individuals' lives makes mandates unlikely anytime soon.

Illinois already has taken one step, approving a program to insure all children whose parents lack coverage but don't qualify for any other type of public assistance. Democratic Gov. Rod Blagojevich has received national recognition for the All Kids program, which is touted for potentially insuring up to 250,000 children for preventive care, dental, vision and prescription drugs. Enrollment is still under way, but 50,000 children are expected to be covered in the first year, according to Kathleen Strand, spokeswoman for the Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services. The benefit will be phased in and won't officially start until July 1.

While All Kids is a laudable program, says Duffett, Illinois simply took the easiest route by focusing on children. "Insuring all kids is the lowest hanging fruit out there. It's the cheapest to do and has the greatest impact on preventive and primary care and the quality of care."

In fact, according to the Kaiser report, adults, especially minorities, are more likely to be uninsured than children. Adults only qualify for Medicaid if they are disabled, pregnant or have dependent children.

But even adults who have health insurance can't always afford to go to the doctor or fill their prescriptions. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and

Photograph courtesy of the Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law



Prevention says about 503,000 Illinois adults reported not seeing a doctor in 2004 because they couldn't afford it, despite having health insurance. They constitute the group called the "underinsured," which is much harder to reach with a public safety net.

All of these concerns will have to be addressed by the statewide Adequate Health Care Task Force, a group created by the 2004 Health Care Justice Act to expand access to affordable health care. The group includes hospital administrators, physicians, consumer advocates, insurers, researchers and lawmakers. The panel is scheduled to present a plan by the end of this year.

Heads are starting to nod as members tell their sides of the story, says panelist Mike Murphy, director of governmental affairs for UniCare, a health insurance company in Illinois. "There were a lot of preconceived notions and attitudes that took a while to melt away," he says, "and I think that thaw is still occurring."

That's partially because each sector of the health care industry has its own concerns. For instance, Duffett says, hospitals say they can't give out any more charity care; large businesses say they can't compete globally with countries that offer universal health care; small businesses say they want to help their employees, but don't have the stability to afford it; and the public is concerned about paying more out of pocket.

Still, conditions are ripe for a compromise, he says. "We are a heck of a lot closer than all of us thought we were, but at the same time, [we want] to have a real debate," Duffett says. "We want that debate to lay out a variety of different ideas in the middle, figure out where and what level of commitment the people and the politicians and special interests are willing to push."

By December, he says, the panel will either support an approach that says, "You're on your own, society," or a commonwealth approach that champions, "Everybody in and nobody out."

Massachusetts took the commonwealth approach, but there's no guarantee the plan will easily translate to other states, says John McDonough, executive director of Health Care for All, a primary advocate for the state's new law.

By 2007, Massachusetts' residents of that state who can afford health insurance will have to buy it. For those who can't, the state will subsidize their policies. Businesses also would pitch in by offering health insurance to their workers or paying a $295 fee per employee.

That was no easy feat for a Democratic legislature and a Republican governor. McDonough's advice for other states is to unite the political spectrum, not necessarily copy Massachusetts' policy decisions. During a Families USA forum in Washington, D.C., this spring, McDonough said, "Look at this somewhat less as a policy blueprint and perhaps more as a political blueprint. Less so a policy blueprint because there are certain idiosyncratic features of the Massachusetts health policy landscape."

The first point for other states to consider is that Massachusetts has a smaller percentage of uninsured residents, about 10 percent, compared to Illinois' 14 percent.

Second, Massachusetts gets a special spigot of federal money through its Medicaid program. The state taxes businesses and hospitals to pay for charity care, which attracts federal matching funds, says Brian Rosman, policy director for Health Care for All. Massachusetts' new law intends to simply shift the money from reimbursing hospitals to subsidizing health insurance for people who can't afford it.

Illinois has a similar plan to tap into federal funds, about $1.8 billion over three years, through a so-called hospital assessment tax, says Strand of the Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services. The new federal dollars would help reimburse hospitals, and a portion of it would go back into the Medicaid system to pay health care providers. But Illinois is still waiting for federal approval.

Third, Rosman says, Massachusetts only has four major insurance companies that control the market. That's far fewer than the 15-some major competitors in Illinois.

States also would have to be prepared

Photograph courtesy of the Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law



to accept the bureaucratic decisions that still face Massachusetts' lawmakers. For starters, they'll have to define what's affordable. Rosman says one tough call will be whether middle-income families, say those who make $60,000 for a family of four, would be covered by the subsidy or would have to pay for their own insurance. They'll also have to define benefits that are critical to include, such as dental care, mental health services and prescription drugs. Then there's the logistical challenge of tracking everyone's income and eligibility, not to mention the businesses that offer health insurance versus those that don't.

With all the loose ends, the Adequate Health Care Task Force in Illinois is waiting to take a position on the Massachusetts law. In the meantime, the Illinois group is mulling over which possible solutions are realistic, given the state's own special circumstances.

For instance, Illinois' large and diverse population calls for careful consideration, says Philippe Largent, vice president of governmental affairs for the Illinois Primary Health Care Association. That includes addressing documented and undocumented immigrants who aren't covered by public or private insurance plans. And it includes supporting community health centers that treat most public aid patients.

"To create good public policy, you have to create the expansion of programs that provide coverage to people, but you also have to have a place where folks can go, a place where patients who are now enrolled in those programs can actively use those benefits in the communities that they live in."

Medical providers also want relief from cash-flow problems caused by the state's overdue Medicaid payments to doctors who care for public aid patients and pharmacists who fill their prescriptions. Currently, Illinois is $1.7 billion behind in payments, which has led some doctors to limit the number of Medicaid patients they see — if they accept them as patients at all.

Murphy says the insurance industry offers another perspective on how to address the diverse group of uninsured Illinoisans. He suggests the state take a closer look at the federal trend of offering tax credits to businesses that insure employees through tax-free health savings accounts, which pay for everything from doctor visits to over-the-counter medications. To this point, health savings accounts haven't always been available to people with chronic conditions. With more development, they could become a more viable option, Murphy says.

Businesses, on the other hand, would like to see more stability in the insurance market and fewer requirements that might impact small and large businesses unevenly, says Todd Maisch, vice president of governmental affairs for the Illinois Chamber of Commerce.

He also questions the ability of the state budget to float more programs. "We've got a tax base that is having trouble right now funding existing taxpayer systems and pensions," Maisch says.

"Proponents should really rethink whether government has the capacity to take on such a huge role."

The state's Medicaid director says Illinois already offers concrete benefits to hundreds of thousands of people under a new style of managed-care system. Anne Marie Murphy of the Department of Healthcare and Family Services says the switch under the All Kids program will connect children to primary care physicians and specialists.

Having a so-called medical home, with their paperwork in one place, makes children less likely to see multiple doctors, get different treatment plans or need costly last-minute emergency room care, says Strand, the department spokeswoman.

The switch will save the state $56 million, and the department expects $37 million more in federal funding for reaching out to children in existing public aid programs.

While the state is connecting children to preventive care now, the public program may pave the way later for the state to develop a similar system on a larger scale.

But expanding public programs is only one way to address the health care headache. The state's task force has been considering ways to divvy up the responsibility of insuring everybody among businesses, individuals and the state. The next step, says Duffett of the Campaign for Better Health Care, is to reach those hard-to-insure adults — sooner rather than later. ❑

Dreams deferred

Affordable housing is out of reach for a growing number of Illinoisans

by Jasmine Washington

Lydia Mahr has held onto her dream home, complete with a front yard and a marble path, for 16 years. And she's been cautious not to take on expenses that would prevent her dream from becoming reality.

"It's like I have to get my mind set like a diet. I know what I have to do to get to the point where I feel like I'm on the right track," says Mahr, a 48-year-old housekeeper at Memorial Medical Center in Springfield. "I'm not trying to rush it. I don't want to get in over my head and then drown."

Mahr says, for the time being, her "caviar dreams on a lemonade budget" are on hold. She will continue to pay $465 a month in rent, not including utilities, while saving for that first step toward home ownership.

Just like Mahr, other low- to middle-income Illinoisans are postponing buying a home, and others are struggling just to keep a roof over their heads.

A March University of Illinois at Chicago study reported that a half million Illinoisans used more than 35 percent of their incomes for housing, an amount higher than the federal government considers affordable. And, despite state and local efforts to alter those numbers, projections indicate that need is going to far outpace the availability of affordable housing.

Three years ago, Gov. Rod Blagojevich created a state initiative to coordinate efforts to promote affordable housing programs. And this spring, lawmakers voted to make permanent that executive order.

But recent reports indicate such efforts may not be enough. "Projection and trend data suggest that excessive numbers of large lot single-family homes and an inadequate supply of affordable small lot single-family homes, town homes and apartments are being planned," notes *Homes for a Changing Region*, a September report by the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus and Chicago Metropolis 2020 that dealt with housing needs for the six-county area. The upshot: Another 140,000 families in the region will join the 730,000 that pay housing costs beyond what they can afford.

Low-cost rental housing is clearly at a premium. There are 1.5 million renter households in Illinois now, mostly in the Chicago area. While the population is growing, the stock of affordable rental housing isn't. In fact, the mayors' report found that the fastest-growing segments of the population — Latinos, African Americans and those over the age of 65 — also tend to have incomes below their area's average.

Illinois' fair market rent (a federally established estimate of gross rental costs) is $802 for a two-bedroom apartment. The National Low Income Housing Coalition found that keeping rent and utilities below 30 percent of a household's income — a generally accepted mark of affordability — means a worker would have to make $15.43 an hour, which is well above the $12.80 earned on average by Illinois renters. To make the rent at that wage, that Illinoisan would have to put in a 48-hour work week.

In Cook County, where the average gross rent is $648 a month, 37 percent of renters have to spend 30 percent or more of their income on housing. In downstate Macoupin County, the average is $422, which forces 27.6 percent of renter households there to spend more than 30 percent of their incomes on rent and utilities. In Illinois, 17 percent of renter households are deemed severely cost-burdened. These Illinois

Photograph by Jasmine Washington



New houses in the Mather Wells neighborhood on Springfield's East Side are under construction through TSP's HOPE, an affordable housing program.

families spend half of their incomes — incomes that are below-average in the regions where they live — on housing.

People who live on such limited incomes are "one paycheck from being on the streets," says Rep. Karen Yarbrough, a Maywood Democrat who chairs her chamber's Housing and Urban Development Committee.

Housing advocates agree. Three years ago, they helped Blagojevich and lawmakers create the plan to preserve and increase affordable housing.

The plan's 2005 progress report boasted that more than $909 million had been spent to purchase, rehab and build affordable housing, the result of spending produced by state tax incentives and loans and federal pass-through programs for developers.

For instance, through the Illinois Affordable Housing Trust Fund, which is fueled by half of real estate transfer tax collections, the state provided loans — about $71 million during calendar year 2005 — for affordable housing development. The Illinois Affordable Housing Tax Credit Program grants a 50-cent tax credit per $1 donated in cash, land or property for affordable housing.

Other programs go directly to low-income residents. Under one, the state will pick up rental costs above 30 percent of an individual's income. A real estate fee will generate an estimated $30 million a year for the program, which is expected to help about 4,000 families.

The fiscal year 2007 budget, allots $69 million for the Affordable Housing Trust Fund. Yet some housing advocates argue that putting more money into housing than into the hands of the needy doesn't help those at the lower end of the income spectrum. Bob Palmer of Housing Action Illinois says housing opportunities for the neediest people should rank higher on the state's priority list for funding. "Their role should be to help the people most in need, but that's something that costs much more and goes [to] fewer [people]."

Housing by the number

4.6 million households in Illinois
3.09 million owner households
1.5 million rental households
$802 fair market rent for a two-bedroom apartment in Illinois
$12.80 average hourly wage of Illinois renters
$15.43 hourly wage needed to afford rent of a two-bedroom apartment
48 number of hours a week that average worker has to put in to meet the rent

SOURCE: *National Low Income Housing Coalition*

Yarbrough allows that state officials have done more to help Illinoisans purchase homes, but that it has been at the expense of those who remain stuck in the "shrinking market" of rental units.

But the spokesperson for the Illinois Housing Development Authority says the vast majority of the state's efforts are directed at rental programs, and the focus of the initiative is on meeting the needs of very low-income families, low-income people who are elderly or have disabilities, and the homeless.

Bryan Zises, director of public affairs for the agency, also says the part of the initiative to boost homeownership has wider benefits, too. Every time someone buys a home, it benefits the state by creating jobs and boosting local property tax revenue. "It provides stability for family, community, state, infrastructure and productivity."

Still, low- to middle-income Illinoisans may have difficulty when they want to own. "The prices of homes in all price brackets are increasing faster than average income," stated the mayors' report. "In this kind of market, it is unlikely that a meaningful number of existing homes will trickle or filter down in price so that they become affordable to moderate income families."

The Chicago metropolitan region's high land prices and fees to developers tend to force builders to construct large, expensive housing to make a profit, the report noted. Meanwhile, the state's reliance on property taxes to fund schools gives local officials incentive to seek the type of new housing — large single-family rather than below-market affordable housing — that produces the most tax revenue.

And modern flexible mortgage lending practices, like very low down payments, encourage new buyers to take on more than they can handle. For others, incurring more debt — and a worse credit rating — ahead of an attempted home purchase can mean the difference between remaining in rental housing and advancing to home ownership.

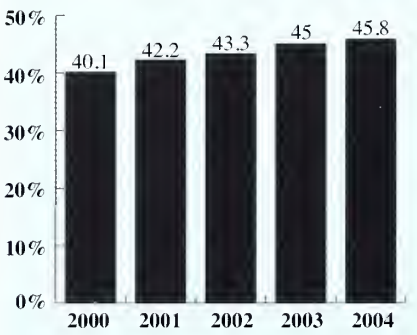
Debt is the most common denominator preventing low- to moderate-income people from buying their dream homes, says Ron Fafoglia, executive director of the not-for-profit home ownership program TSP's HOPE.

But sometimes the biggest hurdle is psychological. "Until you go through the process," Fafoglia says, "it can be intimidating from the outside. Most of them think, 'I pay almost $500 in rent and $300 in utilities, and I live in a dump. So if I'm paying this here, what am I going to have to pay to live in a house?' When in reality they could pay less than that."

This summer, Yarbrough plans to hold public hearings about the barriers to finding housing. They won't be about getting more people into their dream homes, but about the basic principle that everyone deserves an affordable place to live.

"Housing," she says, "is foundational to the basic needs of humanity." ❑

Illinois renters living in unaffordable housing



Unaffordable is defined as spending more than 30 percent of income on housing.

SOURCE: *U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2000-2004*

Who are the homeless?

Photograph courtesy of The State Journal-Register of Springfield



In Springfield: On the outside looking in.

Sometimes the hardships associated with finding affordable housing can lead people to their worst nightmare: homelessness. That reality was substantiated last year in a 24-city survey by the U.S. Conference of Mayors. More than half of the cities that responded reported the high cost of living is one major reason people lack housing.

But Matthew Hanafee, the executive director of the Illinois Coalition to End Homelessness, says the reality often clashes with public perception of what the homeless population looks like. "There is still this idea of a homeless man living under a bridge, addicted to drugs or alcohol and living in [the city]," he says.

Yet families with children accounted for 33 percent of the homeless population in the surveyed cities, and about 15 percent of those who were homeless had a job.

In Illinois, at least 10,000 families are estimated to be homeless, and a recent study found that nearly 25,000 of the homeless population are unaccompanied youth. In the Chicago metropolitan area alone, 166,000 people are estimated to be homeless.

Single women make up about 35 percent of Chicago's homeless, according to Julie Dworkin, policy director for the Chicago Coalition for the Homeless. "There needs to be an understanding that being homeless has more to do with poverty, and the mismatch between housing and wages, rather than personal problems."

Another sizable portion of the homeless is military veterans. Nationwide, there are about 200,000 homeless veterans on any given day, says the federal Department of Veterans Affairs. U.S. Sen. Barack Obama's office estimates that 38,000 veterans in Chicago spend time on the streets in the course of a year. Mental illness, sometimes combined with drug and alcohol abuse, makes it difficult for those veterans to stay in any home.

Though the demand for services has decreased over the years, advocates say, the government has focused on providing shelters rather than addressing the complex issue of homelessness.

Hanafee says the amount of attention an issue receives is related to how society perceives the cause. He described people as having "compassion fatigue" for the homeless. "An issue can only be on the radar for so long," he says. "The homeless crisis turned into more of a condition."

Illinois' fiscal year 2007 state budget does dedicate more money to ease the hardships.

The Homelessness Prevention Fund budget for fiscal year 2007 does dedicate more money to ease the hardships.

The $11 million fund, administered by the Illinois Housing Development Authority, is up $6 million from fiscal year 2006.

Advocates say the state's remedy for the homeless is better than no attention at all. Hanafee says, "In some ways, it could be better, but in a lot of ways it could be worse."

Jasmine Washington

Public to private

Leasing public assets to for-profit companies poses a tantalizing proposition for cash-strapped state and local governments

by Pat Guinane

A Dubai firm's bid to operate six major U.S. ports sparked a backlash this winter so swift and stinging that President George W. Bush warned our country might ruin its international reputation. Pundits scoffed at the notion that a spate of security-minded xenophobia might do more harm than Bush's own take-charge approach to foreign policy. But the simple truth is that America is behind the curve when it comes to private — even foreign — control of major infrastructure assets.

Chicago Mayor Richard Daley is doing his best to change that. Daley secured a landmark $1.8 billion lease of the Chicago Skyway in late 2004, and now he's considering handing control of Midway Airport over to private operators. Likewise, state officials soon could be presented with an offer to privatize the Illinois tollway they simply can't refuse.

That's the way Republican Gov. Mitch Daniels framed his plan to lease the Indiana Toll Road to a Spanish-Australian consortium offering $3.8 billion for a 75-year deal. When the winning bid was announced in January, Daniels was asked what might happen if lawmakers rejected the idea.

"I just think it's unthinkable now," said Daniels, a former Bush budget director elected governor in 2004. "Indiana's not going to pass up this opportunity. We're not going to tear up a $4 billion check."

Privatization poses a tantalizing yet philosophical proposition for increasingly cash-strapped state and local governments. They're promised huge financial windfalls upfront, along with a reduction in administrative burden over several decades. In return, a private firm assumes operation of the asset, be it a tollway, airport or parking garage. The private operator, in general, wins immediate and steady subsequent authority to increase tolls or other user fees. And government distances itself from consumer anger over higher costs.

Ultimately, the Republican-controlled Indiana General Assembly narrowly approved the toll road lease this spring. And, unless a pending legal challenge intervenes, the state will cede control of the 157-mile east-west route on July 1.

Emboldened by Indiana's instant cash infusion, Illinois lawmakers are exploring what likely would be an even more lucrative long-term lease of the state's 274-mile northern tollway system.

"There's clear evidence of the emerging trend for public-private partnership in infrastructure," says state Sen. Jeffrey Schoenberg. "I strongly believe that Illinois should be on the front end of that curve."

The Evanston Democrat last year sponsored a broad accountability measure designed to help the Illinois State Toll Highway Authority shed its reputation as a free-spending fiefdom. Schoenberg also serves as co-chairman of the bipartisan Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability, which late last month planned to hire an outside consultant to determine how many billions a tollway lease might bring the state. The assessment, to be completed by the end of June, could fall to Goldman Sachs, a global financial firm that assisted in the Skyway lease and earned $19.5 million for brokering the Indiana Toll Road deal.

Chicago, meanwhile, is serious about making Midway the first major U.S airport to be put under private control. A multi-decade lease could bring in billions, which Daley would use to build infrastructure, such as schools and libraries, and to shore up four city employee pension funds that face a combined deficit of at least $5 billion.

"The mayor absolutely is on the forefront of this concept by virtue of the fact that, up until the Skyway, there had never been a privatization of a tollway in the U.S., while it's, frankly, very commonplace overseas," says Dana Levenson, Chicago's chief financial officer.

"I think, clearly, the Indiana tollway proved what we knew all along — that the Skyway was not just an isolated incident. I think you'll now start to see cities and municipalities across the country start to examine their 'portfolios' for what can be done, from a practical and political viewpoint."



The Irving Park open road toll plaza on the Tri-State Tollway

Photograph courtesy of the Illinois State Toll Highway Authority

Levenson says Chicago hopes to put out a request for qualifications from potential Midway operators sometime this summer. The General Assembly and the governor last month approved legislation to provide a property tax exemption should the airport on Chicago's Southwest Side come under private control. Lawmakers required that city infrastructure and pension funds receive 90 percent of the proceeds from any long-term lease.

Such transactions caught on overseas decades ago, giving foreign firms an edge in expertise that has made them the winning bidders in a small but growing number of U.S. assets now operating under private control. California, for instance, just approved a massive public works program that opens the door for private firms to operate some state roads.

Investors, especially pension funds and insurers, have found that, like public utilities, tollways and other infrastructure assets offer consistent long-term growth and steady cash flows, says Robert Poole, founder and transportation director of the Reason Foundation, a libertarian nonprofit think tank based in Los Angeles.

"They started realizing this 20 or 30 years ago in Europe, and they realized it more than a decade ago in Australia — about toll roads having those same [investment] characteristics," Poole says. "The realization has only now, in the last few years, started coming to North America."

Here in Illinois, though, there's an example of the pendulum swinging the other way. The General Assembly this spring approved legislation making it easier for municipalities to use eminent domain to reacquire local water systems. The move came after the central Illinois town of Pekin failed in 2004 to convince state regulators it could provide better service than Illinois American Water. The company is a subsidiary of RWE AG, a German investor-owned utility giant that serves customers in 29 states, including 257,000 in Illinois.

Fear of diminished service is just one of the inherent objections to handing major public assets over to the private sector, as Indiana showed this spring. Unrest over foreign control and anxiety associated with higher tolls reigned supreme as Democrats made political hay out of negative public sentiment in northern Indiana, where the Indiana Toll Road runs from Illinois to Ohio.

Already slumping in the polls, Gov. Daniels' approval rating sank to 35 percent a month after the toll road lease cleared the legislature. But Indiana will use most of the $3.8 billion in lease proceeds to build a decade's worth of new roads, giving Daniels two years of ribbon cuttings before the next election.

At the same time, it's difficult to dream up a better privatization petri dish than the Chicago Skyway. The 7.8-mile structure was awash in a sea of red most of its life, so much so that the city literally could not give the bridge away 17 years ago. Opened in 1958, the Skyway spans the Little Calumet River and Calumet Harbor, connecting the south end of the Dan Ryan Expressway with the Indiana Toll Road. Skyway use failed to meet early projections, especially with the new Interstate 80/94 providing a free alternative to the Indiana Toll Road. By the 1960s, Chicago began to fall behind on interest payments to Skyway bondholders. And in 1989, the city even tried to unload the Skyway to the Illinois State Toll Highway Authority, which rejected a $1 sale price.

The mid-1990s advent of casino gambling in northwest Indiana gave Chicagoans a reason to use the route — other than the Indiana Dunes and Notre Dame football. Still, by the time the Skyway became profitable, it was most valuable as a shortcut into the Loop. While northwest Indiana citizens possess an undeniable affinity for the Windy City, they don't get a stake in Chicago elections. And how could the city council reject a Skyway lease when Daley was offering budget relief by unloading an asset already foreign to most Chicagoans?

Chicago used roughly $860 million in lease proceeds to pay off city and Skyway debts. Levenson says about half the remaining windfall — $500 million —

Dubbed public-private partnerships, these deals are gaining acceptance from states with major transportation needs but little start-up capital.

was placed in a perpetual reserve that kicks back about $25 million in investment income each year. Another medium-term reserve of $375 million is providing $50 million a year in budget relief until 2011. After-school programs, parolee job training and other social service providers were promised five years of funding from the final $100 million in lease proceeds.

The same Spanish-Australian partnership that won the 99-year Skyway lease in late 2004 was selected this spring to manage, maintain and upgrade the Indiana Toll Road until 2081. Cintra Concesiones de Infraestructuras de Transporte, S.A. of Madrid owns and operates airports, parking lots and tollways across the globe. Macquarie Infrastructure Group of Sidney, an investor-owned firm, ranks as one of the world's largest private owner-operators of tollways. Together, the companies manage 30 tollways on five continents. Their U.S. investments include the 14-mile Dulles Greenway in Virginia, a 10-mile South Bay Expressway set to open next year in San Diego and a series of ongoing congestion-relief projects between Dallas and San Antonio known as the Trans-Texas Corridor.

Dubbed public-private partnerships, these deals are gaining acceptance from states with major transportation needs but little start-up capital. Indiana, for instance, wants to use a mix of private and state funds to build a long-sought $2 billion extension of Interstate 69 from Indianapolis to Evansville. Conversely, the Indiana Toll Road follows the Chicago Skyway as only the second privatization involving a completed U.S. tollway. Both deals are governed by voluminous contracts covering every conceivable operating standard from plowing snow to removing roadkill. Policing the roads, for example, remains a government obligation, with Indiana setting aside $5 million a year in lease proceeds to pay state troopers.

The contracts — Indiana's spans some 400 pages — allow for predetermined toll hikes. Cintra-Macquarie immediately imposed a 50-cent hike that raised the lone Chicago Skyway toll to $2.50. The company can double the fare to $5 by 2017 and make annual inflation-based adjustments until the lease ends in 2104.

Indiana had not hiked fares on its only toll road in two decades, and the Cintra-Macquarie contract nearly doubles passenger car rates, which state officials contend would have happened even without privatization. The cost of a trip from Illinois to Ohio — now $4.65 — will increase to $8 by July. Most commercial trucks, meanwhile, will see the current rate of $14.55 hit $32 by 2010. After that, Cintra-Macquarie can hike truck and passenger tolls the greater of 2 percent or the annual increase in either the Consumer Price Index or the nominal Gross Domestic Product per capita, which has topped 5 percent the last two years. In return, Cintra-Macquarie has promised $4.4 billion in road repairs and upgrades over 75 years, including the addition of new lanes in congested northwest Indiana and the installation of electronic tolling (think I-Pass), leaving Ohio with the only major U.S. tollway without the technology.

Investing in public infrastructure has its obvious pluses for private firms seeking long-term investment alternatives to what lately has been a weak bond market. "We see this as medium-risk, medium-return investment," Maequarie CEO Stephen Allen told reporters during an Indianapolis visit just days before the toll road lease won legislative approval.

"It breaks the mold of how we traditionally looked at state-owned enterprises," says Poole of the Reason Foundation. "And I use the term enterprise deliberately because these are not like many functions of state government."

Some governments do choose to provide citizens with electricity, water, cable TV or even wireless Internet access. But Poole argues there are good reasons why such services are dominated by investor-owned entities.

"They're better able to figure out what their customers want, they're quicker to invest in new technology [and] they tend to be more efficient, in terms of the labor, because they don't get gummed up, if you will, in civil service regulation that makes it hard to be flexible when the market changes," he says. "I don't find it surprising that, likewise, investor ownership would work better in these other kinds of utilities — airports and toll roads."

Proponents argue that private firms also can pursue more aggressive financing than government and take advantage of favorable corporate tax law, which, for instance, allows them to deduct an asset's depreciation. That alone was worth at least $300 million in the Chicago Skyway deal, Poole estimates. At the same time, detractors undoubtedly question why government can't squeeze the same profits.

Nevertheless, Congress paved the way for more privatization last year when it approved a transportation spending bill that provides $15 billion in tax-exempt bonds for new construction of public-private roadways. Normally, only government entities can issue tax-free debt.

Mayor Daley's Midway privatization plan is made possible by a 1996 law allowing the Federal Aviation Administration to establish a pilot program for up to five airports, including one major hub. Only two small airports have applied for the program, with one winning approval after a more than two-year application process. Stewart International Airport in upstate New York went private in 1999, with the state signing a 99-year lease with National Express Group, a London firm specializing in air, rail and bus service.

In a 2004 report to Congress, the FAA notes that airport privatization of any size requires "a strong political commitment." It's certainly not a stretch to assume that the Midway effort might falter if Daley forgoes seeking a sixth term in next year's mayoral election. To get off the ground at all, the plan needs approval from two-thirds of Midway's passenger airlines and cargo haulers. "You need Southwest [Airlines] no matter what," says Levenson, the city's privatization point man. "You need not only Southwest, but another six or seven of the 11 carriers that are at Midway to approve this transaction prior to it taking place."

If the airlines grant clearance, the next step would be convincing aldermen. "Putting something in front of the city council that they would not approve of is something that we would not do," Levenson says.

There's no question that Indiana's Gov. Daniels summoned every ounce of political capital to advance his toll road lease through the legislature. A Statehouse rally meant to buoy support for the lease and an accompanying "Major Moves" 10-year road construction plan proved disastrous when union workers drowned out the GOP governor with boos and shouts of "Ditch Mitch." Daniels, in turn, repeatedly implored legislators to ignore what he deemed myopic public sentiment and vote for his "jobs bill of a generation."

Still, House Democrats held fast, forcing Republicans to lean on their razor-thin 52-48 majority, a move that put several northern Indiana legislators on the election-year hot seat.

The solidly Republican Senate had no problem passing the bill, even picking up support from two Democrats. But before it was over, the legislature won major spending concessions, including a $500 million "next generation" trust fund to earn interest for future road projects and $292 million for local officials to spend on transportation and economic development initiatives in northern Indiana. Lawmakers also set aside $278 million to effectively freeze passenger vehicle tolls at or near current rates until 2016 by subsidizing any reduction in Cintra-Macquarie revenue.

Sen. Schoenberg says a similar toll freeze must be a cornerstone of any Illinois tollway lease.

"We saw how Gov. Daniels had to later scramble to include that in his proposal as a means of keeping his allies supportive," he says. "That struck me as a reactive move and in Illinois we should learn from that and be proactive in establishing that as one of the ground rules for how the proceeds would be spent."

Indiana waited until after receiving bids to ask legislative permission for a lease, but Schoenberg says he hopes to lay out the ground rules in the General Assembly's fall veto session. Gov. Rod Blagojevich, thus far, has been noncommittal, though it's hard to imagine him turning down a potential influx of billions. Like Indiana and Chicago before it, Illinois would provide job protections or comparable government positions for the tollway's roughly 1,950 employees. Schoenberg says he'd like to go a step further and offer some sort of revenue-sharing option to make the workers "greater stakeholders in the outcome."

It's still too early for anyone to say what the Illinois tollway might fetch. The system brings in close to $600 million annually, or roughly four times what the Indiana Toll Road was expected to generate after imposing higher fares. Whatever bid Illinois might receive, perhaps $2 billion would be needed to repay existing tollway debt, much of it tied to a 10-year, $5.3 billion congestion relief plan entering year three. Once commuters and bondholders are taken care of, Schoenberg says, the remaining proceeds should be used to match $3 billion in federal transportation funds available to Illinois and to help mitigate a nearly $39 billion shortfall in the state's public employee pension funds.

Schoenberg says he hopes to build bipartisan support for a tollway lease. And the Indiana experience, as well as recent state budget negotiations, suggests individual lawmakers might seek a slice of the windfall for their own pet projects.

Even with legislative approval, the plan could face other hurdles. Schoenberg will be consulting with Attorney General Lisa Madigan's office on a host of potential legal questions. And there could be public fallout over the issue of foreign control.

Poole suggests that American firms soon will join their overseas counterparts in the infrastructure game, but not in time to bid on the Illinois tollway or Midway Airport. Meanwhile, an Australian newspaper has reported that Macquarie is mulling a run at the U.S. ports deal abandoned by Dubai Ports World.

As for Chicago, Levenson predicts no uproar over the possibility of foreign Midway operators. "There seems to be no complaints that it is a Spanish-Australian consortium that owns and operates the Skyway because, frankly, the operation has gone flawlessly."

What if Daley does land an unprecedented Midway lease? "If that happens, it will be another earthquake," Poole predicts. "It'll set off just as big a shockwave as the privatization of the Skyway." ❑

Pat Guinane covered the legislative debate over leasing the Indiana Toll Road as Statehouse bureau chief for the Times *of Northwest Indiana. Previously, he was Statehouse bureau chief for* Illinois Issues.

DIGITAL DIVIDE

Race and ethnicity are factors that determine which Illinoisans are the "haves" in the age of information technology

by Cedric Herring

In the new digital age, some Illinoisans have the best information technology the nation has to offer. They have the most powerful computers, the highest quality communications systems and the fastest Internet connections.

Yet the dividends provided by this new digital economy remain out of reach for many. Those Illinoisans don't have access to computers or Internet services. To be on the less fortunate side of this divide means less access to the jobs the new information-based economy provides.

But they won't be the only ones hurt. Illinois stands to lose if these Illinoisans get left behind.

The communications revolution is reconfiguring work, generating entrepreneurship and trade, increasing access to information and creating new modes of community building. At the same time, the expanding integration of Internet technologies is increasing demand for a variety of skilled workers who can develop and support Internet, Intranet and Web applications. Yet the supply of workers skilled in the emerging technologies has not kept pace with demand. Though there is no shortage of workers in the United States, employers often lament the "skills shortage."

And, unfortunately, this skills gap has racial and ethnic dimensions. African Americans comprise 14 percent of the U.S. population and 9 percent of the work force, but they make up 6.6 percent of computer-related occupations. Similarly, Hispanics make up 16 percent of the U.S. population and 10 percent of the work force, but they constitute 4 percent of those working in computer-related occupations.

The gap is growing. The spread between blacks and whites who use computers at work grew from 7 percentage points in 1984 to 11 percentage points in 2003, according to data from the U.S. Census Bureau's Current Population Surveys. Similarly, the gap between Hispanics and whites grew from 9 percentage points in 1984 to 16 percentage points in 2003. This pattern means that the "haves" are becoming more information-rich, while the "have-nots" are falling further behind.

Education and income appear to be among the leading elements driving the racial digital divide.

Not even half of African-American children and Hispanic children have access to the Internet at home — something available to nearly eight in 10 white children. If computer literacy in the future will be as necessary as basic literacy is now, these patterns suggest that blacks and Hispanics are more likely to be at the periphery of the computer and e-commerce revolution in the 21st century.

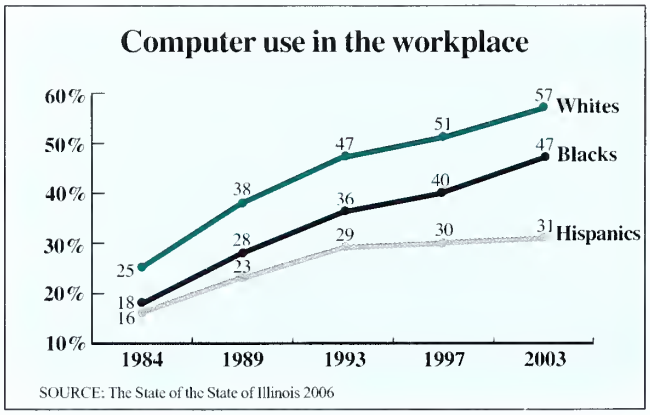
Illinois' yawning digital divide among different races and ethnic groups is even wider than for the nation as a whole. And the gap in computer ownership between white and black households continues to grow, as does the gap between white and Hispanic households.

Blacks and Hispanics are losing ground even faster with regard to Internet access. Among Illinois adults who have computers and access to the Internet, there is a substantial digital divide between whites, on the one hand, and blacks and Hispanics on the other. According to data from the Census Bureau's 2003 population survey, 28 percent of all blacks and 33 percent of all Hispanics in Illinois have computers at home. This compares to 66 percent of whites. Similarly, 18 percent of blacks and 21 percent of Hispanics have access to the Internet at home, compared to 54 percent of whites.

Entire communities lack high-speed Internet access, too. Despite the growing use of online services, communities in nearly one-quarter of Illinois' ZIP codes do not have access.

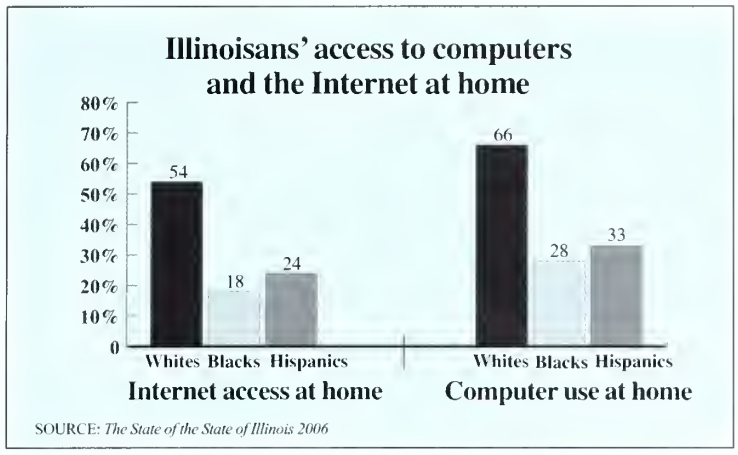
Yet exposure to technological advances plays a role in work force readiness and ensures advantages in securing jobs. Those who have little or no access to technology will be marginalized.

Meanwhile, the nation and the state are losing jobs in sectors that



SOURCE: The State of the State of Illinois 2006

have the greatest percentage of racial and ethnic minorities and gaining jobs in sectors that have the smallest proportions of African-American and Latino workers. And we aren't sufficiently preparing these workers for fields that lack skilled workers, including information technology and network security.



SOURCE: *The State of the State of Illinois 2006*

Relative to white workers, fewer African Americans and Hispanics have college degrees, and even fewer have degrees in math, science or engineering. But beyond this basic skills gap, are racial difference in access to computers and emerging technologies that have work-relevant consequences. These are the workers of the future. Thus, Illinois' greatest demographic growth is among those who are being least prepared for new jobs. People of color constitute one-third (33 percent) of the population of Illinois. The number of African Americans and Hispanics in the state is projected to continue to grow, while the white population will continue to decline. The number of non-Hispanic whites decreased from 8.5 million in 1990 to 8.4 million by 2003. In contrast, the number of Hispanic (non-black) residents increased by more than 100 percent from about 850,000 in 1990 to more than 1.7 million in 2003. The number of blacks in Illinois increased 13 percent from 1.7 million in 1990 to 1.9 million in 2003.

These demographic trends should portend greater numbers of African-American and Hispanic workers. Yet, blacks and Hispanics are the racial and ethnic groups that have the least proportional representation in the upper echelons of the work force. African Americans, for instance, continue to be under-represented in the jobs that are projected to grow the fastest into the next century: those that require the development or use of information technology.

It has been estimated that the Illinois economy will require nearly 7 million workers by the year 2008. Each year, more than 80,000 jobs on average will need to be filled. Professional and technical occupations and service occupations will add the most new jobs through 2008.

Illinois needs to close the digital divide if these new jobs are to be filled by workers who are prepared for the demands of the emerging economy. We should strive for equitable access to new technology. In particular, we should ensure that residents of low-access communities are not further disadvantaged.

For some citizens, technology offers the promise of inclusion, opportunity and wealth; for others, the lack of access to such resources means greater isolation and increased poverty. These realities merit thoughtful responses by policymakers consistent with the needs of Illinoisans in the digital age.

Government, business and community institutions can all play a role in closing the divide. Specifically, legislation that promotes municipal or community-based wireless networks would help narrow the digital divide and make the state more competitive technologically.

The Digital Divide Elimination Infrastructure Fund was established as part of Illinois' telecommunications reform package approved in 2001. It was intended to subsidize construction of high-speed Internet service or telecommunications infrastructure in rural areas of the state. However, eligibility requirements are too restrictive: Only companies released from the responsibility of providing advanced telecommunications services can apply. As a result, no grants were given.

A measure has been introduced in the Illinois House creating a foundation to make grants to public hospitals, libraries and park districts for efforts to eliminate the digital divide. It also allows the foundation to accept and solicit funds from a variety of sources. Community-based technology centers would give access to groups that typically would not otherwise have use of computers and advanced telecommunications.

This proposal takes a step toward closing the digital divide among racial groups. Bolder steps, however, would include municipal or community-based wireless (Wi-Fi) networks. Philadelphia, for example, recently became the first major city in the nation to offer citywide high-speed wireless Internet service. Access costs $20 per month, and low-income residents are eligible to pay half that amount.

In effect, the new Wi-Fi service can be viewed as just another city utility, as city property can be used to locate necessary transmitters and equipment. This policy could be implemented in other communities, as well. Several smaller towns and suburban areas have been offering their residents such services for years.

If the state of Illinois were to promote such bold steps in this state's counties and municipalities, it would take giant steps in eliminating the digital divide. At the same time, it would make the state more competitive economically and generate additional revenue for the state's coffers while preparing current and future workers for jobs in the 21st century.

As the Internet becomes a more mature and pervasive technology, the digital divide among households of different races, incomes and education levels may narrow. Even so, it is reasonable to expect that many people are going to be left behind without some type of intervention. And this has profound implications for all Illinoisans. ❑

Cedric Herring is professor of sociology and public policy at the University of Illinois at Chicago and in the Institute of Government and Public Affairs at the University of Illinois. He is editor of The State of the State of Illinois 2006, *which was produced by the institute. This essay is derived from the chapter, "Race, the Digital Divide, and Workforce Readiness in Illinois.*

Panel for Lincoln celebration named

Thomas Schwartz, the state historian and acting director of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum, and former director **Richard Norton Smith** are among panelists Gov. **Rod Blagojevich** named to a commission that will plan the state's celebration to commemorate the bicentennial of Abraham Lincoln's birth in 2009.

The committee includes **Susan Mogerman**, chief operating officer, the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Foundation; **Jan Kostner**, director, Illinois Bureau of Tourism; **Robert Coomer**, director, Illinois Historic Preservation Ageney; **Paula Cross**, superintendent, state historic sites; **Julie Cellini**, historic preservation chair; and its trustees **Pamela Daniels**, **J. Douglas Donenfeld**, **Edward Genson**, **Laurie Hoffman**, **Elizabeth Smith** and **Roger Taylor**.

Other members are **David Bahlman**, executive director, Landmarks Preservation Council of Illinois; **Terry Barnhart**, history professor, Eastern Illinois University in Charleston; **Jerry Blakemore**, general counsel, Southern Illinois University Carbondale; **Edward Carroll**, history professor, Heartland Community College in Normal; **Sundiata Cha-Jua**, director, African American Studies and Research Program at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign; **Rodney Davis**, co-director, Lincoln Studies Center at Knox College in Galesburg; **Julie Dirksen**, guest services director, the Lincoln presidential museum; **Phil Funkenbusch**, shows administrator, the presidential museum; **Richard Hart** of the Abraham Lincoln Association; **John Hoffmann**, librarian and curator, Illinois Historical Survey at the University of Illinois; **Terri Jackson**, diversity director, University of Illinois at Springfield; **Richard Jasculca**, chairman and CEO, Jasculca/Terman & Associates public relations firm; **Gary Johnson**, president, Chicago History Museum; **Ron Keller**, curator, Lincoln College Museum; **Marilyn Kushak**, chairwoman, Springfield Readiness Committee; **Shirley Madigan**, chairwoman, Illinois Arts Council; **Allison Payne**, anchor/reporter, WGN-TV Chicago; **Graham Peck**, assistant professor of history, St. Xavier University in Chicago; **Shirley Portwood**, professor of historical studies at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville; **Jerry Roper**, president and CEO, Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce; **James Sanders**, superintendent, Lincoln Home National Historic Site; **Nicky Stratton**, director, Looking for Lincoln Heritage Coalition; **Axel Steuer**, president, Illinois College in Jacksonville; **Cherryl Thomas**, president, the Ardmore Associates engineering consulting firm; **Kristina Valaitis**, executive director, Illinois Humanities Council; **Andy Van Meter**, chairman, Sangamon County Board ; and **Douglas Wilson**, co-director, Lincoln Studies Center, Knox College.

Shifts at the top

Randy Dunn, state superintendent of schools, announced he is leaving to become president of Murray State University in Kentucky. Dunn became superintendent in September 2004 on an interim basis. He was named the permanent chief in August 2005 and given a contract that runs until January 2007.

O BITS

Lovana "Lou" Jones



Lovana "Lou" Jones

The assistant majority leader of the Illinois House died May 8. She was 68.

The South Side Chicagoan served 19 years in that chamber. She chaired the Public Safety Appropriations Committee and focused her efforts on women, children, prisoners and, most recently, grandparents raising grandchildren.

One of her last plans was to create a $1,000 college tuition grant for high school seniors who live with their grandparents. "Trust me, I'm not working on this for it to fail," she said during a committee hearing this spring. "I really want to help this group of children, give them a chance to go to college." Her measure was sent to the governor.

She raised five grandchildren after her daughter passed away about 10 years ago, said Steve Brown, a spokesman for the House speaker. She also took in several other children.

Robert Madigan

The former state senator from Lincoln died May 4. He was 63.

Madigan, a Republican, was a senator from 1987 to 2001, when he was appointed to the Illinois Industrial Commission by former Gov. George Ryan.

During his Senate tenure, Madigan was chairman of the Pension Laws Commission, the Insurance and Pension Committee and the Illinois Legislative Sportsmen's Caucus. Before joining the legislature, Madigan was Lincoln's city clerk.

Carl Becker

The director of conservation programs for the Illinois Chapter of the Nature Conservancy died at his Petersburg home on April 13. He was 56.

Becker, who retired in 2002 from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources as chief of the Division of Natural Heritage, is credited with the idea of the income tax check-off for the Wildlife Preservation Fund. The check-off, which began in 1983, was the first such fund established by the legislature and continues to provide about $250,000 a year in donations from taxpayers to support researeh projects and protect endangered species and nongame wildlife.

For updated news see the *Illinois Issues* Web site at http://illinoisissues.uis.edu

Q&A Question & Answer

Anne Marie Murphy

She has been Illinois' Medicaid director since Gov. Rod Blagojevich took office in 2003. Her priority is getting the All Kids health insurance program set to phase in next month.

Health policy is an unexpected preoccupation for a woman who started out studying the DNA of fruit flies. But now her average day consists of attending five to eight meetings, testifying to legislative committees and implementing public programs. As Illinois' Medicaid director, she frequently prepares plans A through C, more if needed.

Through this month, her daily calendar will be consumed with coordinating the last-minute details of the state's new $45-million health insurance program for children. It will start to phase in next month and is expected to insure about 50,000 children in the first year.

Expanding health insurance programs is her long-term goal, but it also reflects her past insights gained on a seemingly random path from Ireland to Illinois.

The Dublin native studied natural sciences at Trinity College Dublin before researching fruit flies at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore. While there, she analyzed the insects' DNA to learn how cells multiplied in cancer stages versus normal development. Her doctorate degree in molecular genetics hinted at her aspirations to become a college professor, but "life evolved," she says.

Part of that life included volunteering one day a week at House of Ruth, a Baltimore clinic connecting people to social services. "I thought that domestic violence policy would be a really interesting thing to study, so I wanted to work on the Hill," she says, "and did work on the Hill."

She made her debut as a Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee staff member for Illinois Sen. Paul Simon and Massachusetts Sen. Edward Kennedy. She later became senior health care policy adviser for Illinois Sen. Richard Durbin, advising him on Medicare, Medicaid, health insurance, public health, mental health, medical research, domestic violence prevention and veterans' health care.



Anne Marie Murphy

Her Washington, D.C., experience instilled in her the desire to make public policy that would help an average person and those most in need. Murphy says she saw the potential to focus on "the art of the possible" when Illinois became a blue state in the 2002 general elections.

"I thought it would be really fun to run a health care program," she says. "I thought that the fact that Illinois had a Democratic governor and Democratic House and a Democratic Senate was a great opportunity to do positive things."

She focuses on finding ways to expand public services. "If you want to effectuate change, the Medicaid program is the best place to start," she says. "Not like a hammer, but collaboratively to effect healthy outcomes."

Yet staying focused on the art of the possible sometimes requires her to take a step back from the string of meetings and the stress of the daily grind. What helps her keep it real, she says, is talking to people directly about their needs. "Think about our lives and how we interact with the health care system," she tells herself, "but also think about how other people's lives are. What are the challenges they have?"

The following is an edited version of a conversation between Murphy and Statehouse Bureau Chief Bethany Carson.

Q. You worked with Illinois Sen. Richard Durbin during the development of the Medicare Modernization Act. How did that experience shape what you brought back to Illinois?

It's not a good idea to enact policies that are purely based on ideologies without also thinking thoroughly how they will work in real life. The Medicare program is a good example where a viewpoint was put forth, and it wasn't always consistent with the best interests of seniors.

Q. How has the relationship between the feds and the states changed since you became Illinois' Medicaid director?

[T]he number of uninsured is going up. Here at the state level, we've been doing a lot. I think local politics and state politics are responsive to consumer demands, and that's exciting because we effectuate what people want and care about.

Q. What could policymakers learn from the way health care is treated in Ireland?

In most other industrial nations, there is a safety net that includes universal health care. That does not necessarily mean the system is perfect. It does mean no one has to worry. You can worry about getting hit by a car or a truck. You won't worry about bankrupting your family due to it.

Q. How will Illinois contain costs if it continues to expand Medicaid services?

We leave no stone unturned. The reality is health care technology is expensive, but the benefit can be substantial. You have to look at this in the context of reducing disability, increasing productivity, lengthening life and improving education. Spending a little bit to make sure they're healthful — to not do it would be penny-wise and pound-foolish. ❑

Emergency contraception not an abortion issue

Thank you for publishing Nanette Elster's essay on the erosion of abortion rights in America (see *Illinois Issues*, April, page 17). She makes it clear: Whether or not *Roe* is overturned, anti-choice hardliners in Congress and in the states are chipping away at a woman's fundamental right to choose.

However, your sidebar about state-level abortion laws was misleading. Gov. Blagojevich's order requiring pharmacies to dispense emergency contraceptives is not an abortion rights issue; it is a family planning and prevention issue. Emergency contraception (EC) is a safe method of preventing pregnancy, and is therefore not related to abortion.

In fact, the only relationship between EC and abortion is that studies have shown that wider, timely access to EC could prevent as many as 1.7 million unintended pregnancies and 800,000 abortions nationwide each year.

Pharmacists (and others) who confuse EC with abortion are confusing proven science with ideology. In the future, we hope your readers will come to see emergency contraception as the responsible method of prevention it is, and something we should all strongly support.

Pam Sutherland
Illinois Planned Parenthood Council
Springfield



Write us

Your comments are welcome.

Letters to the Editor
Illinois Issues
University of Illinois at Springfield
Springfield, IL 62794-9243

And visit *Illinois Issues* online by going to:
http://illinoisissues.uis.edu

ACEC
Illinois

AMERICAN COUNCIL OF ENGINEERING COMPANIES OF ILLINOIS
5221 S. 6th Street Rd., #120
Springfield, IL 62703
217/529-7430

Visit our website for information on:

- Selecting an Engineer
- Searchable Database and Links to ACEC-IL Member Firms
- Upcoming Events
- Committees
- Engineering Excellence Awards
- Links to Government & Related Sites

www.acec-il.org

CAMPAIGN
ENDORSEMENTS
ISSUE
ADVOCACY
REACH
VOTERS
TARGET
POLITICIANS
GRASSROOTS
LOBBYING

ADVOCATE, INFORM, INFLUENCE!
USE THE PROVEN POWER OF PRINT.
THE ILLINOIS PRESS ADVERTISING SERVICE
GETS RESULTS!

Need a Logo?
LogoDesign By IPAS!
Call Mendi today!
217-241-1700
Fast & Professional
Only
$50/Hr!

From customized quotes to fit your budget, graphic designer to create your ad, ad placements, invoices and tearsheets.....

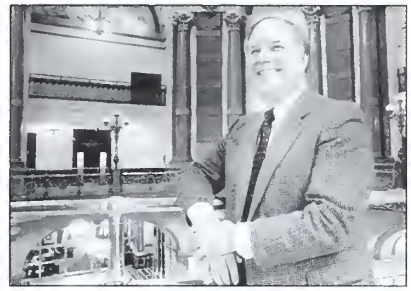
We make newspaper advertising EASY!

Border To Border With Just One Order

ILLINOIS PRESS
Advertising Service

The Illinois Press Advertising Service
900 Community Drive. Springfield, IL 62703
Phone: 217.241.1700 Fax: 217.241.1701
www.illinoispress.org jholman@il-press.com

Charles N Wheeler III



A thoughtful voter might conclude there's some truth on all sides of the budget debate

by Charles N. Wheeler III

"This spending plan reflects our values. This spending plan responds to working families ... [and the] unfortunate in our state."

Sen. Jeffrey M. Schoenberg, an Evanston Democrat.

"This is a fiscal fiasco that is staring the taxpayers in the face. What we have is a champagne and caviar budget when we can't afford it."

Rep. Dave Winters, a Shirland Republican.

"We found just the right level of funding to make this budget work."

Rep. Gary Hannig, a Litchfield Democrat.

By Election Day, Illinoisans will have heard countless variations on those themes, as candidates depict through partisan spectacles the state budget for the fiscal year starting July 1.

Looking beyond the glitzy 30-second campaign spots, a thoughtful voter might conclude there's some truth on all sides.

Certainly, the $56.8 billion fiscal blueprint Democrats sent to Gov. Rod Blagojevich early last month — without any Republican votes — includes a bevy of showcase programs intended to boost him to a second term and bolster the fortunes of his legislative party mates.

But Republican criticism is on target, too, especially the GOP complaint that the new programs are funded largely by ignoring current bills, to the tune of almost $3 billion in pensions and Medicaid obligations, with grievous consequences for the future.

Consider, for example, state funding for elementary and secondary education, where the new budget would increase grants to local school districts by $417 million, according to the State Board of Education.

Consider, for example, state funding for elementary and secondary education, where the new budget would increase grants to local school districts by $417 million, according to the State Board of Education.

Included is a $170 increase, to $5,334, in the foundation level, the guaranteed amount available in state and local resources for each student. Lawmakers also earmarked $45 million more for early childhood education, a down payment on Blagojevich's plan for universal preschool for 3- and 4-year-olds, and $10 million for a pilot program to reduce class sizes in selected grade schools.

But Republicans note the $417 million increase in grants is more than offset by a $485 million cut in the state's scheduled pension payment to the teachers' retirement system, part of a two-year Democratic plan to shift $2.3 billion from the five state-funded pension plans into spending on current programs.

Concern about pension funding is not just a partisan issue; a Wall Street bond house warned in April that the state's $41 billion unfunded pension liability — the largest in the nation — likely would hurt the state's credit rating.

Moreover, under the deferral plan adopted last year, the required retirement contribution would more than double in just three years, jeopardizing funding for schools, health care, human services and other causes dear to Democrats.

Education advocates, meanwhile, pointed out that the increase in the foundation level would not keep pace with inflation and fell far short of the $6,405 recommended by school finance experts.

Nor was the preschool expansion truly "universal," as the governor ballyhooed, but instead would be available first to youngsters deemed at risk because of low income or other circumstances, then to children from families earning less than four times the federal poverty level, roughly $80,000 for a family of four. In addition, the program is set to expire after the 2007-2008 school year, far short of the minimum five-year span early childhood education experts say would be needed to reach all eligible kids.

In similar fashion, Democratic law-

makers approved a new college aid plan the governor can claim will help working families pay higher tuition costs, though not as generous to the better-off as Blagojevich initially proposed.

Under pressure largely from minority Democrats, lawmakers reshaped the governor's call for a $1,000 tuition tax credit for good students in their first two years, regardless of family income. The compromise targets $34.4 million more to the need-based Monetary Award Program and a like amount to a new MAP Plus, which would offer grants of $250 per semester to sophomores, juniors and seniors whose family incomes do not exceed $200,000.

But the new program, which would be in effect only for the coming academic year, is contingent on the state's sale or restructuring of its $3 billion-plus secondary student loan portfolio, the details of which remain to be worked out. Moreover, the $500 available under the new grant program would not cover tuition and fee increases at many state schools. At the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, for instance, tuition will climb $666 next year, while tuition and fees will jump $984 at Southern Illinois University Carbondale.

Education advocates, meanwhile, pointed out that the increase in the foundation level would not keep pace with inflation and fell far short of the $6,405 recommended by school finance experts.

University administrators say the ongoing hikes are the result of four years over which state support for their schools dipped by some $196 million. Public universities are in line for a $26 million increase — less than 2 percent — in FY07.

While Blagojevich touted funding for his plan to provide health insurance coverage for all Illinois children, as well as a new $8-million program to assist needy veterans, GOP lawmakers criticized the mounting backlog of bills from doctors, pharmacists and other health care providers for services rendered under the existing Medicaid program.

Sitting on as much as $1.8 billion in past-due health care bills, Republicans argued, amounted to stiffing providers to free up dollars for new programs. Administration officials said the backlog would not exceed $1.3 billion, allowing bills to be paid more quickly than at present. Whichever estimate proves more accurate, health care advocates warn that the state's chronic slow-pay practices threaten care for the needy by making practitioners less likely to treat Medicaid patients.

But Blagojevich and his partymates are betting that voters will be happier with a spend now, pay later budget than with the live-within-our-means alternative Republicans are offering. ❑

Charles N. Wheeler III is director of the Public Affairs Reporting program at the University of Illinois at Springfield.



The Center for State Policy and Leadership at University of Illinois at Springfield presents

POLITICS & RELIGION

4th Annual Public Policy Summit

Luncheon and Keynote Address 11:45 a.m.-1:45 p.m., Public Affairs Center, Level 1, Rm. C/D

"Religious Pluralism: Civic and Political Issues in a New Religious America"



Dr. Diana L. Eck, Professor of Comparative Religion and Indian Studies, Director, The Pluralism Project, Harvard University and author of *A New Religious America: How a "Christian Country" Has Become the World's Most Religiously Diverse Nation (2001)*

Luncheon requires advance registration and payment. Call (217) 206-7163. Registration deadline is June 13. Check in 11:15-11:45 a.m. day of event. $12.00 general public, $8.00 UIS students, faculty, staff (UIN required) & UI Alumni Assoc. members

Afternoon Panel Discussion 2:00-3:30 p.m., Public Affairs Center Rm. G, free and open to the public

"Islam in America" featuring UIS Professor Baker Siddiquee and guest panelists

Evening Keynote Address 7:30 - 9:00 p.m. Studio Theatre, Public Affairs Center, UIS

"Iraq, Islam and Democracy"



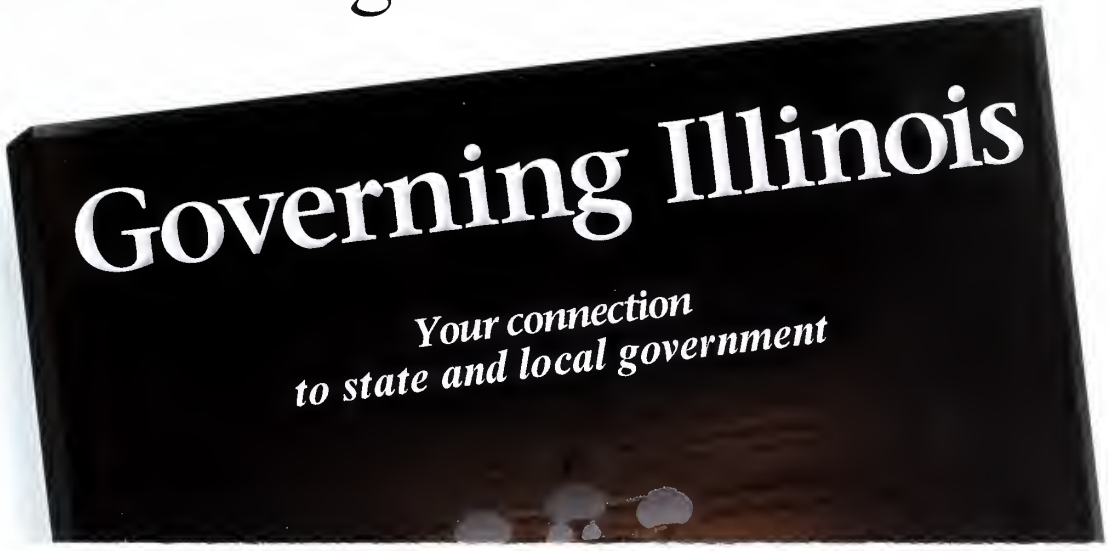
Dr. Noah Feldman, Professor of Law, New York University School of Law, Senior Advisor for Constitutional Law, Coalition Provisional Authority, Iraq, 2003, and author of *Divided by God: America's Church-State Problem and What We Should Do About It (2005)*

Free and open to the public. No reservation necessary; seating is first come, first seated. Cosponsored by World Affairs Council of Central Illinois

UIS

For more information, see our website: http://cspl.uis.edu Events will be web cast live at http://www.uis.edu/technology/uislive.html

The third edition of the classic text on Illinois government



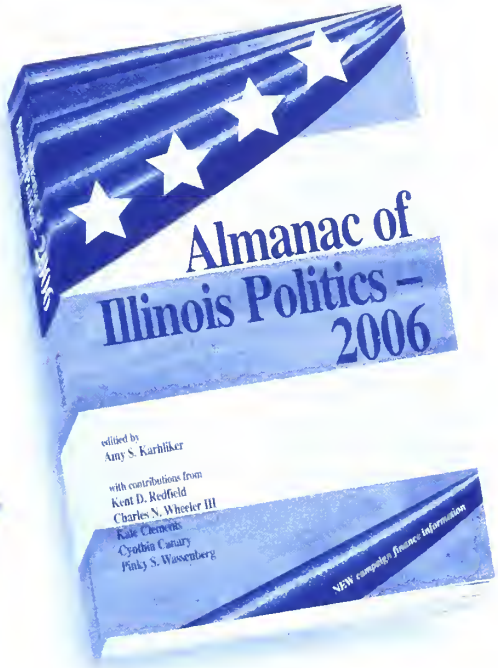
Almanac of Illinois Politics–2006

☑ Yes, I want to order today
Almanac of Illinois Politics-2006

_____copies x $45.00 _____
plus postage and handling
($3.00 first book, $.50 for each additional book) + _____
TOTAL _____

Ship to:
Name _____
Address _____
City_____State____Zip_____

Bill to:
Name _____
Address _____
City_____State____Zip_____
Daytime Phone _____
Credit card ❑ VISA ❑ Mastercard
Acct. No._____Exp. Date _____
Signature _____



0406-00662-43080

Governing Illinois is a compact — but complete — description of how Illinois government works. From the state constitution, to the General Assembly, to the court system, to school and sanitation boards, you'll find all the basics of state and local government in this single source. Used for high school and college courses on state government for more than a decade, *Governing Illinois* is the perfect guide to the inner workings of the statehouse, the courthouse, and the council chambers.

To order call 217-206-6502 or purchase online at http://cspl.uis.edu/CenterPublications/

makers approved a new college aid plan the governor can claim will help working families pay higher tuition costs, though not as generous to the better-off as Blagojevich initially proposed.

Under pressure largely from minority Democrats, lawmakers reshaped the governor's call for a $1,000 tuition tax credit for good students in their first two years, regardless of family income. The compromise targets $34.4 million more to the need-based Monetary Award Program and a like amount to a new MAP Plus, which would offer grants of $250 per semester to sophomores, juniors and seniors whose family incomes do not exceed $200,000.

But the new program, which would be in effect only for the coming academic year, is contingent on the state's sale or restructuring of its $3 billion-plus secondary student loan portfolio, the details of which remain to be worked out. Moreover, the $500 available under

Education advocates, meanwhile, pointed out that the increase in the foundation level would not keep pace with inflation and fell far short of the $6,405 recommended by school finance experts.

will climb $666 next year, while tuition and fees will jump $984 at Southern Illinois University Carbondale.

University administrators say the ongoing hikes are the result of four years over which state support for their schools dipped by some $196 million. Public universities are in line for a $26 million increase — less than 2 percent as a new $8-million program to assist needy veterans, GOP lawmakers criticized the mounting backlog of bills from doctors, pharmacists and other health care providers for services rendered under the existing Medicaid program.

Sitting on as much as $1.8 billion in past-due health care bills, Republicans argued, amounted to stiffing providers to free up dollars for new programs. Administration officials said the backlog would not exceed $1.3 billion, allowing bills to be paid more quickly than at present. Whichever estimate proves more accurate, health care advocates warn that the state's chronic slow-pay practices threaten care for the needy by making practitioners less likely to treat Medicaid patients.

But Blagojevich and his partymates are betting that voters will be happier with a spend now, pay later budget than with the live-within-our-means

NO POSTAGE NECESSARY IF MAILED IN THE UNITED STATES

BUSINESS REPLY MAIL
FIRST CLASS MAIL PERMIT NO. 1901 SPRINGFIELD, IL
POSTAGE WILL BE PAID BY ADDRESSEE

Center Publications
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT SPRINGFIELD
PO Box 19243
Springfield IL 62794-9980

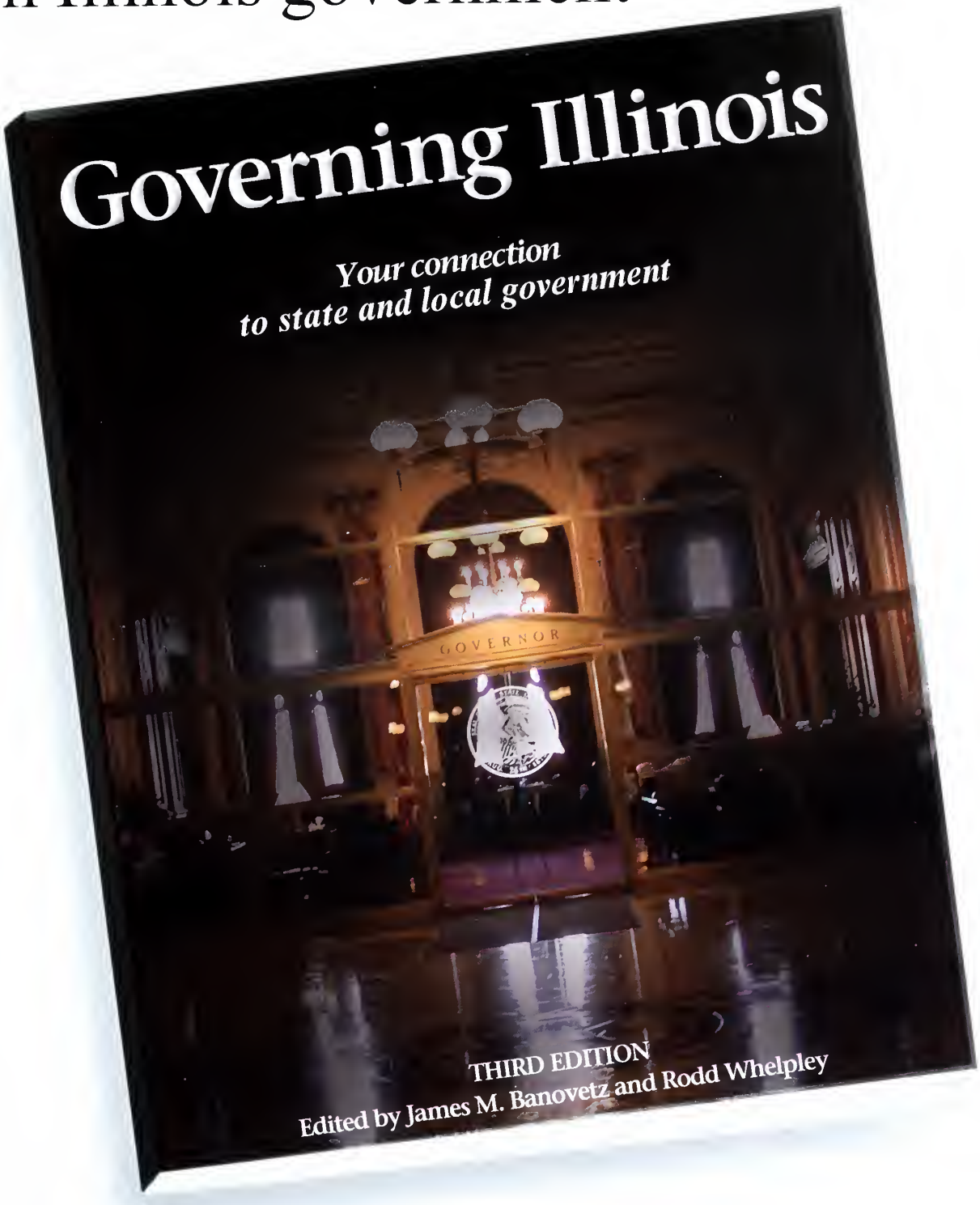


Free and open to the public. No reservation necessary; seating is first come, first seated. Cosponsored by World Affairs Council of Central Illinois

For more information, see our website: http://cspl.uis.edu Events will be web cast live at http://www.uis.edu/technology/uislive.html

UIS

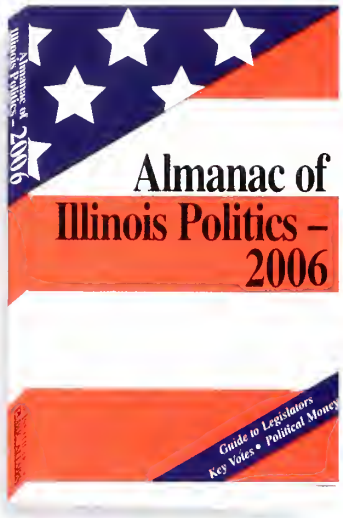
The third edition of the classic text on Illinois government



Governing Illinois is a compact — but complete — description of how Illinois government works. From the state constitution, to the General Assembly, to the court system, to school and sanitation boards, you'll find all the basics of state and local government in this single source. Used for high school and college courses on state government for more than a decade, *Governing Illinois* is the perfect guide to the inner workings of the statehouse, the courthouse, and the council chambers.

To order call 217-206-6502 or purchase online at http://cspl.uis.edu/CenterPublications/

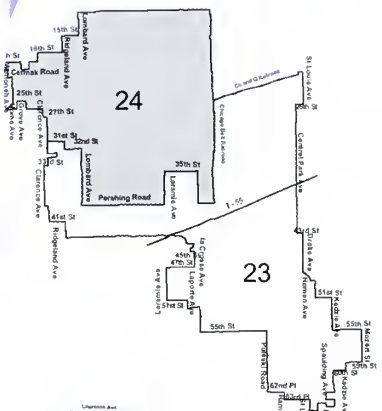
Almanac of Illinois Politics – 2006

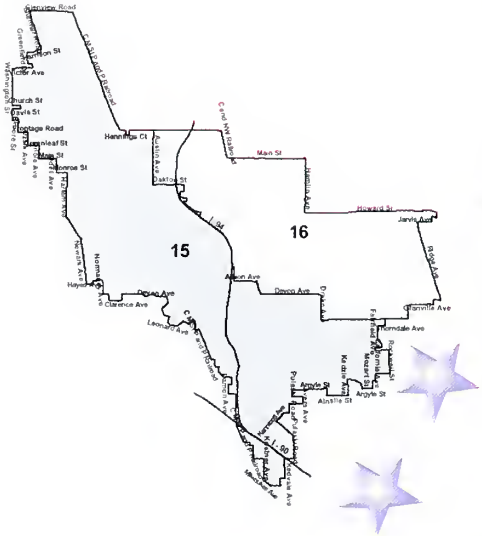


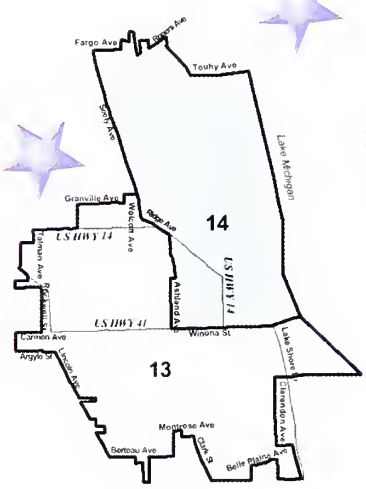
The #1 guide to Illinois government

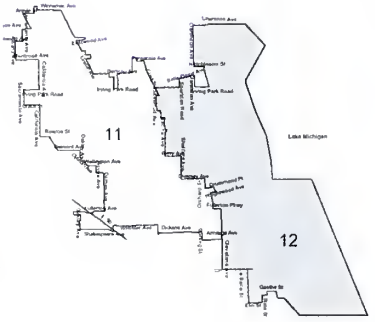
Since its first edition in 1990, the biennial *Almanac of Illinois Politics* has been *the* resource for information on the key players in Illinois government.

- **U.S. Senators**, **Congressmen**, **State Senators** and **State Representatives**
- **Phone numbers**, **fax numbers**, **e-mail addresses** and their **web sites**
- **Voting records** on the top issues of 2004
- Top **contributors,** legislators and their opponents









It's all in the *Almanac of Illinois Politics — 2006.*

"A very worthwhile reference for everyone who needs a ready information source on state government."

— Michael J. Madigan
Speaker of the Illinois House

"I have always found the Almanac of Illinois Politics to be very helpful. It is the ideal informational resource on state government."

— Frank Watson
Minority Leader, Illinois Senate

$45.00 ***plus*** **postage and handling**

($3.00 first book, $.50 for each additional book)

Please refer to the tear-out order form inside this issue or call 217-206-6502!